Macapagal reappoints officials bypassed by CA

STORY ON PAGE A2

NO PIECE OF CAKE

(Story on Page A2)

5-ft-high strawberry cake is the pride of La Trinidad Valley Mayor Nestor Fongwan.

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Tuesday, March 19, 2002 ★ 40 pages / 3 sections / vol.17 / no. 101 P15

Gov't gets Danding shares in Bulletin

By Volt Contreras

THE SANDIGANBAYAN has forfeited in favor of the government the shares owned by businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco Jr. in the Manila Bulletin, which it declared part of the "Marcos ill-gotten wealth."

GOV'T/A16

FBI chief to RP: We want Mr. Jimenez

FBI DIRECTOR Robert Mueller expresses to President Macapagal the US sentiment to "extradite him (Mark Jimenez) expeditiously." (At left) The fugitive Jimenez managed to insert himself between President Macapagal and former President Fidel Ramos during rites celebrating the 16th anniversary of People Power I last Feb. 25.

JOAN BONDOC/ERNIE SARMIENTO

By Christine Herrera, Juliet L. Javellana and Michael Ubac

MANILA Rep. Mark B. Jimenez is no international terrorist, but the head of the US Federal Bureau of Investigation wants him badly just the same.

How badly? Nothing short of a swift extradition, according to visiting FBI Director Robert Mueller who refuses to even acknowledge Jimenez's current official title.

To Mueller, the fugitive is just plain old "Mr. Jimenez."

"We want Mr. Jimenez extradited expeditiously back to the US to face charges. The extradition of Mr. Jimenez is important to us," the FBI chief yesterday told newsmen at the US Embassy's Seafront Compound along Roxas Boulevard.

Mueller, who arrived Sunday for an overnight visit, met Monday with President Macapagal-Arroyo and other officials to brief them on the US-led global war on terrorism—and to press for Jimenez's extradition.

Jimenez, however, just shrugged off Mueller's statement, saying it was nothing but a "repetition" of the US government's longstanding request for his extradition.

"My case is in court so it will be the (Manila Regional Trial Court) that will decide," he told the INQUIRER over the phone.

Jimenez was indicted in Florida in 1999 for tax evasion, mail fraud and illegal contributions to the Democratic Party.

He fled to the Philippines, cultivated close ties with deposed President Joseph Estrada and managed to stave off his extradition through the courts. Last year, the businessman ran for Congress and won a seat representing Manila's sixth district.

FBI/A17

Al-Qaida out to get nukes, US warns

By Christine Herrera and Dona Pazzibugan

THE UNITED States has alerted its allies to watch out for attempts by Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network to produce weapons of mass destruction, the visiting US Federal Bureau of Investigation director told reporters yesterday.

FBI director Robert Mueller raised the concern in talks with President Macapagal-Arroyo and other officials. He said evidence gathered in Afghanistan showed without doubt that the Saudi-born Bin Laden and the al-Qaida were trying to obtain biological, chemical and nuclear weapons.

"There is no question. The al-Qaida and Osama bin Laden were attempting to obtain weapons of mass destruction and we have seen evidence of that in Afghanistan," the FBI chief said at a news briefing at the US Embassy.

"We have not seen any definitive evidence that he was successful but there is enough there to cause us substantial concern and . . . to say to countries

AL-QAIDA/A17

GMA sees nothing unusual in more US troops

By Carlito Pablo, Cynthia D. Balana and Juliet L. Javellana

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday said she saw nothing unusual in the requested deployment in Basilan of additional American soldiers for the RP-US Balikatan 02-1.

While pointing out that the supposed request from the United States had yet to reach her desk, the President said the deployment of 300 more US troops would be covered by "a continuing arrangement" under the RP-US Visiting Forces Agreement.

At one time, she said in her nationally broadcast weekly radio interview, 5,000 US servicemen visited the country within a year as part of the joint military exercises.

She also said that under the VFA, the two countries could hold a number of Balikatan exercises in one year. "That's the context" of the request for additional troops, she added.

But Sen. Rodolfo Biazon said that the number of US soldiers participating in the war games was not the issue and that amending the terms of reference (TOR) to allow for an increase in their number would not be a problem.

The issue is "the role that they are going to play as dictated by the TOR, which provides for their non-combat role in Basilan," said Biazon, vice chair of the Senate committee on national defense and security and former chief of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Negros Occidental Rep. Jose Apolinario Lozada Jr., chair of the House committee on foreign relations, demanded to know the intentions behind the US request.

"*Ano ba talaga ang plano nila* (What exactly is their plan)?" he said, adding that the request was giving him "the shivers" and that he was "beginning to

GMA SEES/A16

DFA admits 'serious' shortage of passports

By Christine Herrera

IN THE LAST two weeks, the line of passport applicants at the back of the Department of Foreign Affairs annex has gotten markedly longer. The waiting time for a new passport has also increased, to eight days from the usual three. What is going on here? Yesterday, the DFA 'fessed up.

DFA spokesperson Victoriano Lecaros admitted there was a "serious shortage" of blank passports, a shortage felt keenly not only at the DFA main office but also at the country's embassies or consulates in Saudi Arabia, Hong Kong, Los Angeles and San Francisco.

The shortfall in supply was noted as early as January at the head office, Lecaros said. He said the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas had failed to print enough passports to meet the daily demand of 9,000 passports worldwide. There were reports of a breakdown in the BSP's printing system, he said, but quickly added that the BSP had already

DFA/A16

NGIIII! NASAAN NA ANG ICE DROP KO?
ANO 'TO?

The heat is on: Ice on halo-halo melts faster

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

HAVEN'T you noticed that shaved ice on your *halo-halo* melts faster than usual? If you have, that's because the mercury has started rising, prompting the weather bureau to advise the public to brace themselves for hotter days.

Last Sunday marked the highest temperature recorded so far this year in Metro Manila. At 2:40 p.m., the temperature rose to 35.7 degrees at the weather bureau's Science Garden in Diliman,

THE HEAT/A17

President takes another media adviser

By Dona Pazzibugan

THERE is yet another layer on top of the President's official and not-so-official media group: spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao, Press Secretary Noel Cabrera, Undersecretaries Bobby Capco, Manuel Sanchez and Carmen Suva, and the President's "personal publicist," Dante Ang.

Yesterday, President Macapagal-Arroyo created a new media position—presidential assistant on media and ecclesiastical affairs—for Conrado "Dodi" Limcaoco.

Can a turf war be far behind?

Already, Tiglao and Limcaoco have different ideas about what the latter's job entails.

"I am the spokesman of the President," Tiglao said, adding that Limcaoco's role is mainly as "adviser for making sure that we properly liaise with churches and any other groups (like) NGOs."

But Limcaoco, the spokesperson and deputy campaign manager of the People Power Coalition in the senato-

PRESIDENT/A4

The poor told: Forget Erap, let's move on

By Carlito Pablo, *in Manila* **and Raj Padilla,** *PDI Visayas Bureau*

THE SOONER the poor stop dwelling on the issue of Joseph Estrada, the faster will the country get out of the rut, President Macapagal-Arroyo said yesterday.

She aired this new tack at her weekly, nationally broadcast radio interview, indicating that she had focused her battle for the hearts and minds of the poor where it mattered most: their bellies.

The President said progress would be attained much easier if the poor would let "the laws and the courts," and "not emotion or politics," rule in the resolution of Estrada's trial for plunder and other crimes before the Sandiganbayan.

"Investors will be more encouraged to conduct business in the country if they know that we are abiding by our own laws," she said in Filipino. "This will be a sign for them that their investments are in good condition here in our country."

Ms Macapagal made a fresh bid for public sympathy as the expected pro-Estrada mass actions timed for the resumption Friday of his trial fizzled out.

Only a handful of Estrada supporters showed up, as though to show that the ousted leader no longer had the draw-

THE POOR/A4

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Second FRONT PAGE

SIYA PA RIN ANG TYPE!

Giant strawberry cake wows 'em

By Frank Cimatu and Jovelyn Reyes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

LA TRINIDAD, Benguet—This town's giant strawberry cake was the wrong shade of red but it was luscious, nonetheless. The seven-foot strawberry sponge cake was lopped up by 10,000 guests, who came early as noon Monday to take a bite of the giant "strawberry."

The giant cake highlighted the weeklong Strawberry Festival here and Mayor Nestor Fongwan said this signaled the town's drive to export organic temperate fruits and vegetables.

At least 520 kilos of ripe strawberries for the giant cake, 420 kilos for flavoring and 100 kilos for toppings went into the baking of the cake, said Eric Espadero, chief baker and owner of Valley Bread Bakeshop. The cake cost P70,000.

To complete the cake, bakers consumed 200 kilos of flour, 200 blocks of butter, 175 kilos of sugar, 5,000 eggs, 100 kilos of cream icing, one-and-a-half kilos of cream of tartar, 20 kilos of honey, 20 kilos of soya oil, 10 kilos powdered sugar, two-and-a-half kilos of baking powder and one-and-a-half bottle of green and red food coloring.

Gloria sticks by her men

By Blanche S. Rivera and Dona Pazzibugan

IN THE END, the President stuck by her man.

The embattled Commission on Elections chair, Alfredo Benipayo, and two other commissioners were yesterday re-appointed, ending speculations that the President would drop them to end the impasse in the poll body.

The congressional Commission on Appointments did not confirm the appointments of Benipayo, Resurreccion Borra and Florentino Tuason—all Macapagal appointees—ostensibly because of the infighting at the Comelec.

Ms Macapagal also re-appointed Transportation Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez and Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez, both of whom had also been bypassed by the CA.

The President said the CA's official explanation was that it had run out of time to finish the confirmation hearings of the two Alvarezes.

"Since that was the given reason, I am giving them the chance to continue (with the hearings)," she said.

The President announced the re-appointments in her weekly radio program, "Ang Panawagan ng Pangulo."

Ms Macapagal said she would reach out to the four other Comelec commissioners who are appointees of ousted ex-President Joseph Estrada.

The Macapagal and Estrada appointees in the Comelec have been at odds almost from day one.

Ms Macapagal said the four Estrada-appointed commissioners—Luzviminda Tancangco, Ralph Lantion, Rufino Javier and Mehol Sadain—were "open" to her invitation to dinner.

She said she wanted to help the two camps to resolve their longstanding feud, which Senate President Franklin Drilon and other senators had tried but failed to bring together.

She said the Comelec officials should overcome their differences so they could conduct the July barangay elections in an orderly manner.

Benipayo has been bypassed seven times by the CA because of strong opposition by his colleagues at the Comelec.

Borra and Tuason, who are allied with Benipayo, were also re-appointed for a term of seven years until Feb 2, 2008.

Benipayo, who has been the subject of a smear campaign allegedly funded by his rivals and a consortium seeking his disqualification, came out of a meeting yesterday looking very pleased with the news of his reappointment. He was applauded by his staff and guests.

While the two factions battle it out at the Comelec, the National Movement for Free Elections yesterday said it has a "very strong suspicion that money has been going around" to push for the implementation of the controversial Voters Registration and Identification System (VRIS).

Namfrel secretary general Guillermo Luz said the persistent defiance of Tancangco, Lantion, Javier and Sadain "defies logic."

Tancangco, who is in charge of the Comelec's modernization program, is said to be vigorously fighting, with the backing of her three allies, for the implementation of the Photokina consortium's P6.5-billion contract to carry out the VRIS.

"One can only venture a guess (as to) why she's (Tancangco) so insistent on the VRIS. There must be something to hide if they're so insistent," Luz said.

Tancangco retorted that since it was the Namfrel which brings up such money controversies, "maybe they're the ones doing it, and they're just passing on the blame to us."

Nokors make final dash to freedom

By Norman Bordadora

THEIR ARDUOUS journey to a better life in South Korea was almost over yesterday for 25 North Koreans who flew out of the Philippines at 1:04 p.m. on the final leg of their bid to live in freedom.

The 25, including six families and two orphaned girls, had made a daring dash into the Spanish Embassy in Beijing, last week.

Put on the spot, China and other countries came up with the solution of flying the asylum seekers to a third country—the Philippines—from which they could then fly on to Seoul.

Yesterday, after a weekend hiatus during which they underwent medical checkups reportedly performed by South Korean doctors flown in for the purpose, all 25 appeared recharged and looking forward to new lives in Seoul.

Most of them wore inscrutable expressions, although a few smiled and many just dashed for their plane—a Korean Airlines Boeing 777—for the three-hour flight to Seoul.

They were seen off at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport by officials of the South Korean Embassy in Manila and were escorted by local immigration agents and airport policemen.

While they were kept from the media when they arrived in Manila Friday night, this time the North Koreans were presented to news photographers before they were whisked off to their waiting aircraft. No interviews were allowed by authorities, however.

The North Koreans spent the weekend in Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City, under tight security.

They had barged into the Spanish Embassy in Beijing on Thursday and asked for help to get to South Korea.

At least one of them threatened to commit suicide if they were not given assistance.

After negotiations with several countries, the 25 refugees were allowed to transit through the Philippines before flying on to South Korea.

National Security Adviser Roilo Golez met the North Koreans when they arrived late Friday evening.

He said the assistance given by the Philippine government to the North Koreans was for humanitarian reasons.

Golez noted the North Koreans were visibly tired following their departure from Beijing.

With AP, AFP and Reuters reports

Pinoy family starts new life Down Under

SYDNEY—Immigration Minister Philip Ruddock was on hand Monday to hug Australia's six millionth migrant since World War II, a Filipino computer expert.

While Ruddock is the point man in Australia's increasingly hardline stance against illegal immigrants, his department also accepts thousands of skilled workers who apply formally to migrate here each year.

Cristina Jurado was given a warm welcome by Ruddock after she touched down at Sydney airport early Monday with her husband Carlo and their children, 6-year-old Jolo and 3-year-old Lara.

Jurado said she was looking forward to building a new life in her adopted home.

"Sydney is a very developed city in Australia," she said.

"There are a lot of opportunities for young migrants like us."

The 29-year-old systems analyst and her husband, a 32-year-old production engineer, arrived in Australia under the skilled migration program.

"Australia is a better country, the economy is healthy, the future for my children is better that's for sure," Jurado said. ***AP***

FVR not running, Ming rules

By Carlito Pablo

IT'S final—former President Fidel Ramos isn't running in 2004.

And this is because his wife, the amiable former first lady Amelita "Ming" Ramos, said so, according to Mr. Ramos, who celebrated his 74th birthday yesterday.

"The final disapproval came from Mrs. Ramos," said the former chief executive in jest, during a nationally broadcast radio interview with President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"There's no way, Eddie," Ramos quoted his wife as saying when reporters interviewed him recently in his home province of Pangasinan regarding talk he may run again for the presidency.

Ms Macapagal and Ramos were interviewed at the Riviera Golf Club in Silang, Cavite, during the golf tournament held in honor of the former president.

Ms Macapagal's birthday wish for the celebrant? That all the reforms he started during his term in 1992-1998 will be pursued with vigor.

Ramos' supposed plan to seek another presidential term—which he has repeatedly disavowed—was reportedly the cause of an earlier rift between them.

Ms Macapagal, despite consistently playing coy about her political plans, is widely believed to be planning to run in 2004.

Ramos himself had said there was a "gray area" in the 1987 Constitution regarding the reelection of Presidents.

Ramos pointed out that while reelection is not allowed for incumbent Presidents, former Presidents could seek another term.

Gloria: I still trust MILF

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday said the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front still had her trust despite reports the rebels were massing for possible attacks.

Ms Macapagal said the government would not scrap a ceasefire pact forged with the MILF, which has been waging a rebellion since 1978 to set up an independent Islamic state in Mindanao.

"So far, I can see they have shown good faith in seeking peace," the President said over dzRH radio but she stressed both sides have to work harder "to speed up the peace talks."

Erratum

The Anti-Money Laundering Council and the **Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas** extend their apologies to **Hon. Francis N. Pangilinan**, whose name should have read as "Hon. Francis N. Pangilinan" and not as "Hon. Francisco N. Pangilinan" as printed in the publication of the *Implementing Rules and Regulations of the Anti-Money Laundering Act of 2001* (Republic Act No. 9160) that appeared in the March 18, 2002 issue of this newspaper.

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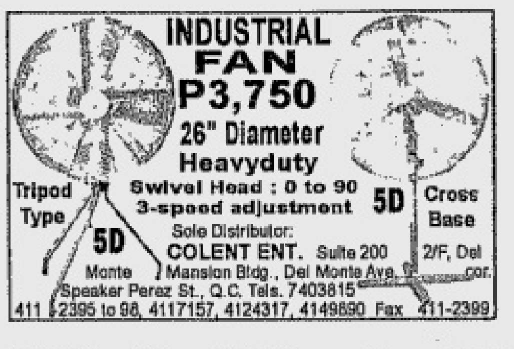
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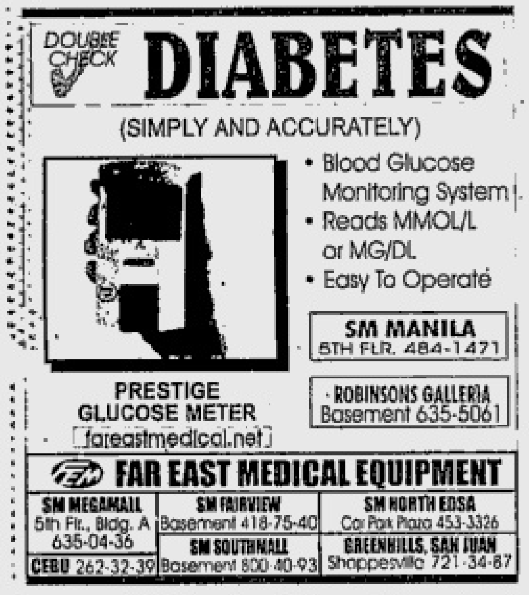
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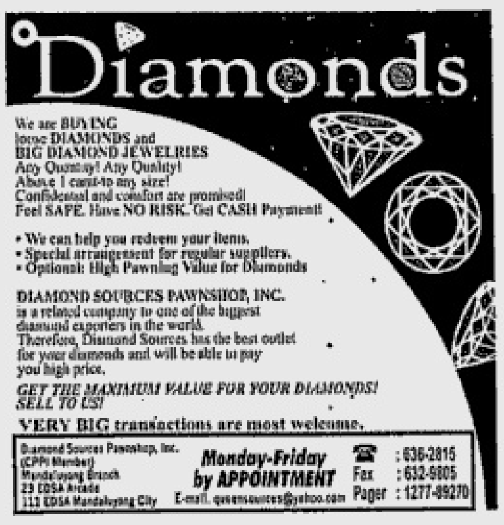
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Graft buster can't afford a cell phone

By Dona Pazzibugan and Rocky Nazareno

THE GOVERNMENT'S new chief graft buster cannot afford to buy a cellular phone, much less a car.

Dario Rama, 62, a former Commission on Elections commissioner, took a taxi to Malacañang yesterday for his swearing-in as chair of the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission.

Antonio Bernardo, a former finance undersecretary, was also sworn in as Bureau of Customs commissioner.

President Macapagal-Arroyo ordered the two to catch "big fish" in a few months' time.

Rama just happened to mention his personal situation when he talked to reporters after he was sworn in.

He said the PAGC was running on a "small budget."

"But we don't mind. In fact I ride taxis because I don't have a car. I don't even have a cellular phone. I can't afford it," he said matter-of-factly.

He said he would ask Malacañang for an official vehicle, preferably a Toyota Revo.

"But if the funds will not allow that, it's okay," he said.

Shortly after his Comelec term expired in 1993, Rama became commissioner of the Presidential Commission Against Graft and Corruption, the agency that preceded the PAGC, from 1994 to 1997.

He resumed his law practice in his Davao City hometown until the was appointed to the PAGC last February.

"Corrupt officials must be identified, immediately suspended and charges must be filed in court I need results in a month's time," Ms Macapagal said.

She said the second people power uprising that ousted Joseph Estrada and elevated her to the presidency last year, "was all about people power versus corruption... in high places."

"I want my administration to be remembered as a successful anti-graft administration," she said.

Bernardo will have his work cut out for him at the notoriously corrupt customs bureau.

Barely a week into the job, Antonio has been asked by Senate President Pro Tempore Manuel Villar Jr. to crack down on the smuggling of agricultural crops.

Polio drive 'a success'

THE SECOND round of the Department of Health's Polio Free Immunization Campaign was even more successful than the first round, according to Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit.

In the second round held on March 2-8, partial results show the DOH was able to immunize 12.1 million or 101.7 percent of the 11.9 million children below 5 years old.

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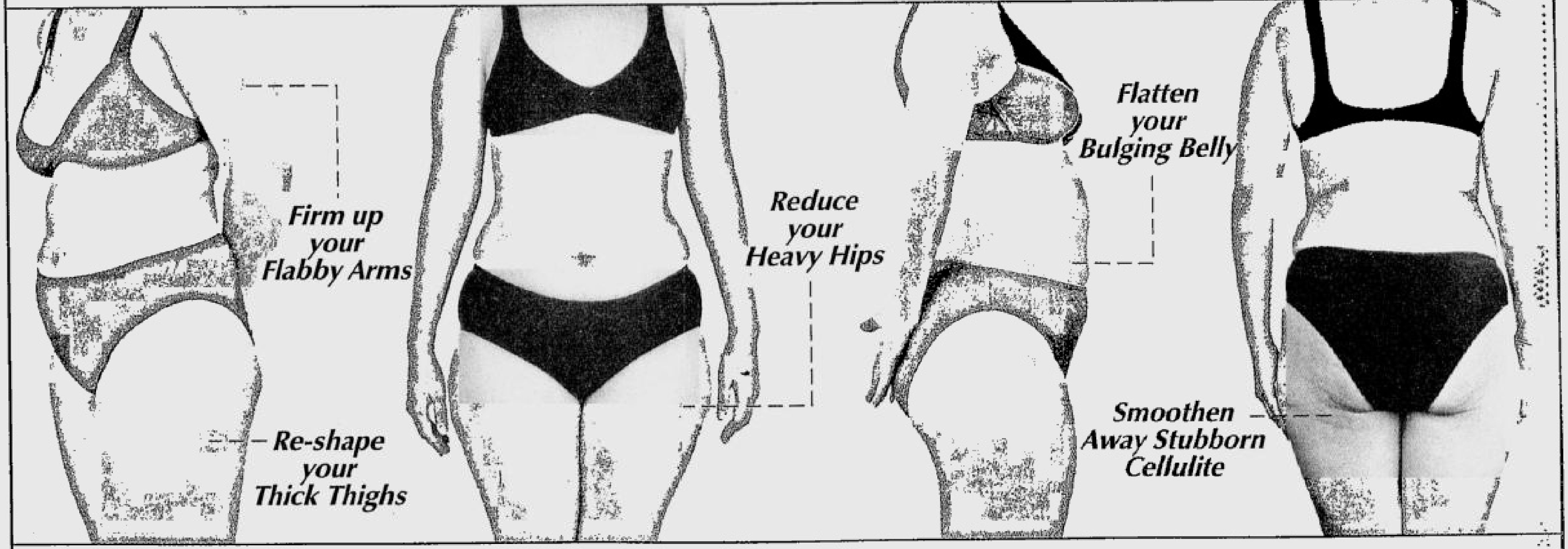
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The poor told: Forget Erap, let's move on

From page A1

ing power.

But Brother Mike Velarde, who served then President Estrada as spiritual adviser, urged the administration to be more patient with the ousted leader for the sake of national unity.

Velarde told the INQUIRER Sunday in Iloilo City that it was only through reconciliation and dialogue that the divisions affecting the people and the economy could be addressed.

"In any crisis, dialogues are very important," said Velarde, leader of the charismatic group El Shaddai. "We can still reach out to (Estrada). There are people out there just waiting to be tapped to bring us back together."

Velarde said it was up to the administration to involve these "well-meaning individuals," whom he did not name, in reconciliation efforts.

Rule of law

Ms Macapagal said not only Estrada but also "the importance and effectiveness of our justice system that are at stake."

She said laws should be obeyed by everyone, "whether he is President or not, the rich and the poor, the strong and the weak."

"Let's allow the cases against the former President to be resolved in the courts and not in the streets," she said, adding that the world was watching the country to see how it would deal with Estrada.

"Let's show them that the rule of law is observed here in the Philippines," she said.

The President said that her eyes and ears were open to the plight of the people, and that she was certain "only a little more patience is needed" from them.

"On the other hand, I expect that you will also keep your eyes open in order to see why it is important for us to support the judicial system," she said.

Ms Macapagal also reminded the people that like her predecessors in office, it was her duty and obligation to uphold the law and ensure that the Constitution would be accorded proper respect.

Fair play

Velarde stressed that he had not been in contact with Estrada for months, but said the former President deserved to be heard and understood, and not ridiculed for his views.

"Everybody is entitled to call for fair play," Velarde said. "*Ano ba ang kanyang panawagan? Makabubuti ba ito? Tama ba ito* (What is he calling for? Is it right? Will it be good for everyone)?"

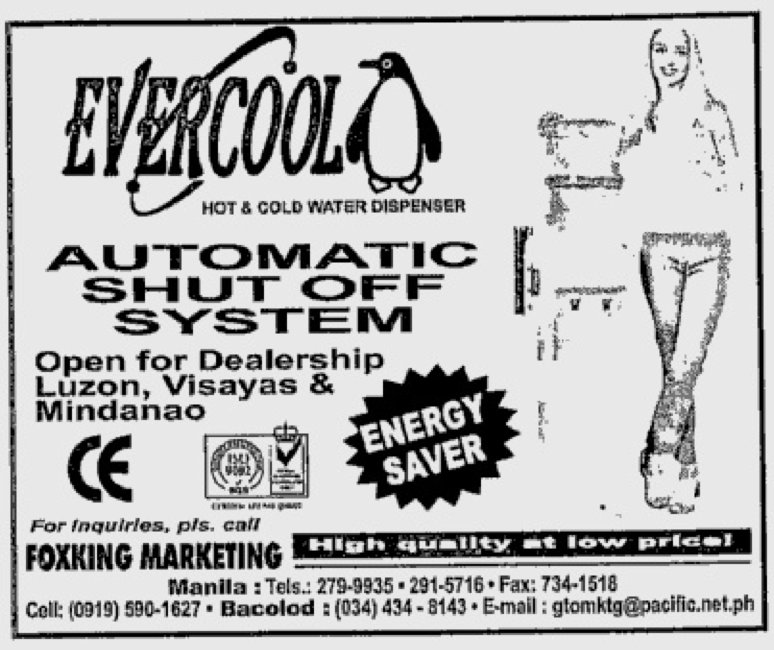
Velarde pointed out that Estrada was merely expressing what was in his mind when he said that he no longer had faith in the courts.

"He has qualified that statement. I share his idea that we have a good system but there are people running it who do not deserve their posts," Velarde said.

The El Shaddai leader said he wanted to see everyone, from former presidents down to ordinary people, accorded equal time and space as well as due process.

Velarde was in Iloilo for the anniversary celebration of El Shaddai's local chapter at the University of San Agustin campus grounds.

Estrada dismissed his lawyers late last month, claiming that he no longer believed he could get justice from the courts. Earlier, he admitted in an interview that he had signed bank documents as "Jose Velarde."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President . . .

From page A1

LIMCAOCO

rial election last May, has an entirely different view of his role in the Macapagal administration.

In a radio interview, he said the President tasked him to find ways to "unlock in the soonest possible time" the coco levy funds which have been under litigation for 16 years.

Closely identified with former President Cory Aquino, Limcaoco said he was also authorized to consult with coconut farmers' groups to determine how best to use the funds to their advantage.

Unclear

Cabrera, who resigned last month, is generally seen as a victim of the infighting among the President's key media men. Tiglao will replace him on April 1.

Although Cabrera pleaded "burn-out," insiders said he could have been worn out by Ang's meddling, and by being constantly kept in the dark about Palace affairs.

Tiglao himself was not clear why the President needed to create a position for Limcaoco.

Limcaoco's position may have been decided two weeks ago when the President met with Zamboanga Archbishop Fernando Capalla, coconut farmers' representatives and concerned government officials over the coco levy funds.

Limcaoco said he did not see any conflict between him and Ang and Tiglao.

"Dante, Bobi and I are friends. I think we have our respective territories or expertise," he said.

While Tiglao is spokesperson and soon to be press secretary, and Ang is the President's image handler, Limcaoco said he would just attend to the "media outside the Palace."

Atenean

An Atenean, Limcaoco has a degree in Political Science and a master's in Industrial Psychology.

"He was one of the few who could combine academics and extracurriculars. In high school, he was a hardcourt hero and a perennial honors lister," according to a 1998 INQUIRER article about him.

After the first People Power Revolution in 1986, Aquino named him general manager of the government-run PTV-4. He also headed the Bureau of Broadcasts and the Laguna Lakeshore Development Authority.

After Aquino's term, he went back to private business.

Living proof

In 1995, he was diagnosed with a terminal liver cancer. Two-thirds of his liver was removed, which incredibly grew back.

"I am living proof that the Lord really acts in the world," Limcaoco told the INQUIRER in 1998 of his recovery. Often seen at the Edsa Shrine where he serves during Mass, Limcaoco had said that his life he has left up to God.

Go easy on Indon terror suspects, Jakarta asks

JAKARTA—Indonesia has called on the Philippines to give fair treatment to three Indonesians arrested for possessing components for explosives and said it was too early to say if they had links with the al-Qaida terror network.

Foreign Minister Hassan Wirajuda also said on Monday that Jakarta would seek further information on the men, detained by Philippine police last week as they were trying to leave for Thailand.

"Today our embassy in Manila may meet the three. We are trying to ask for a guarantee from Manila the three will get fair treatment and do not lose their basic rights," Wirajuda said.

"Based on a preliminary report I got, the three were caught carrying some kind of explosive devices. They were not bombs, but components to build explosive devices. We really regret this," he added.

Police intercepted the men at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport on Wednesday night and said components for improvised explosives were found in their baggage.

Charges of illegal possession of explosives have been filed and police said they had been monitoring the three on suspicion they were connected with another Indonesian, Fathur Rohman al-Ghozi, arrested in the Philippines earlier this year.

Al-Ghozi told investigators he was a member of Jemaah Islamiah, a clandestine group suspected to be linked to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida, but denied knowing the Saudi dissident.

Authorities have linked Jemaah Islamiah to Bin Laden, prime suspect in the Sept. 11 attacks on the United States, but Wirajuda said it was too early to say if last week's arrests were linked to international terrorism. **Reuters**

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, March 19, 2002
St. Joseph, Husband of Mary

1st Reading: 2 S 7:4-5, 12-14, 16
2nd Reading: Rom 4:13, 16-18, 22
Gospel: Mt 1: 16, 18-21, 24

Jacob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, and from her came Jesus who is called the Christ—the Messiah.

This is how Jesus Christ was born. Mary his mother had been given to Joseph in marriage but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit.

Then Joseph, her husband, made plans to divorce her in all secrecy. He was an upright man, and in no way did he want to discredit her.

While he was pondering over this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, descendant of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. She has conceived by the Holy Spirit, and now she will bear a son. You shall call him 'Jesus' for he will save his people from their sins." When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had told him to do and he took his wife to his home.

COMMENTARY

Imagine the pride and joy of Joseph in his son, Jesus, as he watched him grow and taught him the skills of a carpenter. We may truly call them father and son, for they were faithful to all that that relationship involves. That Jesus delighted in calling God "Father" and "Abba" (Daddy, Papa) the name he called Joseph every day, is the highest tribute to Joseph and shows the great responsibility of parents, for it is their love which more than anything else opens the heart of a child to know God. It is supposed that Joseph died before the public life of Jesus, in the company of his wife, Mary, and his son, Jesus. This makes him the patron of the dying as well as the living. "The communion of saints" means that we are in relationship with Joseph in Christ. He is on line in the spiritual internet. Try!

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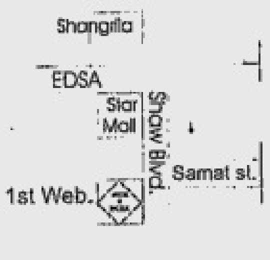

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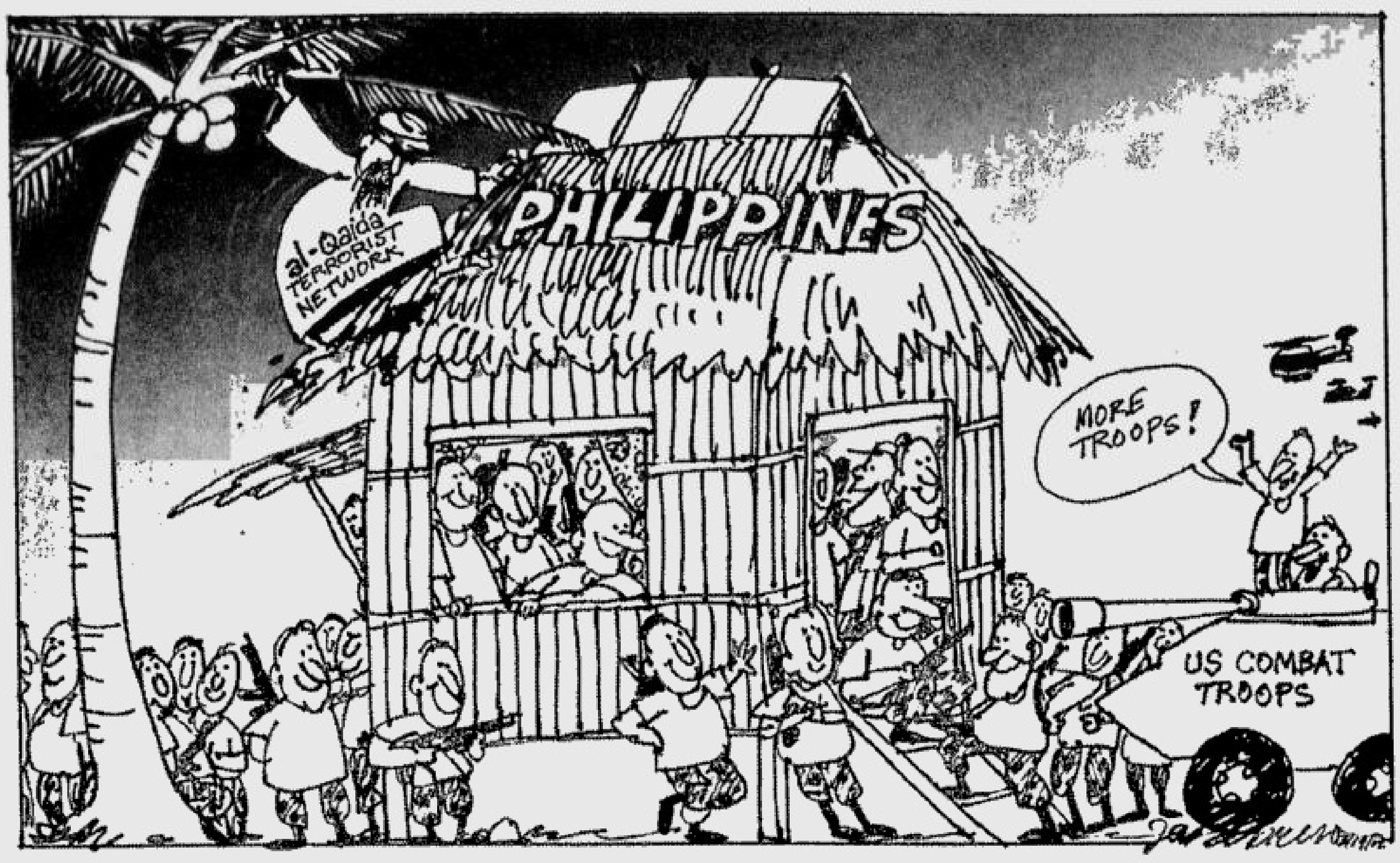

Erap trial live

EDITORIAL

DEPOSED President Joseph Estrada and his lawyers have alleged that the Sandiganbayan special division trying his case and the Supreme Court are biased against him. They want to transfer the trial from the courts of justice to the court of public opinion. Unfortunately for Estrada, there is nothing in the Rules of Court that allows a case to be tried by the public.

There is, however, a way to ensure that the proceedings in the Sandigabayan are conducted with full transparency. The prosecution can move for a reconsideration by the Supreme Court of its motion to allow live media coverage of the hearings. Live coverage will show the public whether Estrada is indeed being given a fair trial or not.

Live TV coverage was allowed during the impeachment trial of Estrada by the Senate more than a year ago. We believe that nobody can say that Estrada was not given a fair trial by the Senate sitting as an impeachment tribunal. Many of the people watching the proceedings were frustrated and angered by the way the defense lawyers tried to prevent at every turn the presentation of evidence against Estrada. But that's the way trials are—they have to be conducted strictly according to the rules of the court where they are being held.

Those opposing live TV coverage of the trial say that it would make the lawyers engage in "grandstanding." We don't think it will. And if the lawyers do play to the grandstand, the presiding justice can always reprimand them and tell them to follow the rules of proper decorum in court.

Sen. Edgardo Angara said that live coverage might inflame passions and unduly influence the viewers. We don't think it will. Television coverage of the impeachment trial in the Senate did not inflame passions. The greater part of the proceedings was boring, consisting of long question-and-answer segments that had lawyers asking witnesses about the minute details of certain documents presented in evidence. The proceedings became livelier only when surprise witnesses were presented and they made startling revelations that kept the audience glued to their TV sets. No passions were inflamed; only the curiosity of the people was stirred.

If live TV coverage of the Sandiganbayan is allowed, its presiding justice has the authority to keep the proceedings orderly. She has the power to admonish lawyers who may be going out of bounds and she can even cite them for contempt and have them fined and jailed.

Live TV coverage of the libel case filed by then President Corazon Aquino against Max Soliven and Luis Beltran was allowed. It did not result in lawyers playing to the grandstand. If anything, TV, being a cruel medium, showed the incompetence and atrocious accents of some of the lawyers. The live TV coverage of the trial did not inflame passions. President Aquino heeded the summons of the court to testify before it. She comported herself well during the trial, and correctly and respectfully answered the lawyers, who after all are officers of the court, with a "Yes, Sir" or a "No, Sir."

That was just a libel case where the maximum penalty is six years in prison. In Estrada's case he is facing the charge of plunder where the maximum penalty is death. Here it is even more imperative that the trial be opened to live TV coverage so that the people will see how a former president comports himself in a trial that could literally cost him his life. The trial should be so transparent so that there would be no doubt that he was given a fair trial.

With live TV coverage, the people will see for themselves what is actually happening. At present, the people are getting their accounts second-hand from the media and from the prosecution and defense lawyers who make interpretations and comments which serve to advance their respective cases. Because there was no transparency in the proceedings, the defense lawyers (before they were dismissed) were able to twist the facts to suit their purposes.

Estrada's complaint about the alleged bias and partiality of the courts by now has become a tired refrain. Let the people know if his charge is true or not. Open the trial to live media coverage.

Atienza disqualification not yet moot

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

LAST March 4, this column revealed that the National Capitol Region office of the Commission on Elections had recommended the disqualification and annulment of the proclamation of Manila Mayor Lito Atienza. A couple of days later, Atienza's lawyer, Romulo Makalintal, said that the disqualification is already "moot and academic" since Atienza has already been proclaimed.

Election lawyer Pete Quirino Quadra disputes Makalintal's assertions. "Either Atienza and his lawyer are both ignorant of the applicable election jurisprudence or they are both desperately misleading the public," said Quadra.

He pointed out that as early as May 17, 2001, the director of the Comelec NCR recommended the suspension of the proclamation of Atienza because "the evidence of guilt against him for violating Section 261 (o) of the Omnibus Election Code for illegal use of public funds is strong." However, the resolution of the petition for disqualification was unreasonably delayed. It was filed way back on April 16, 2001 but it was resolved by the Comelec NCR only on Jan. 29, 2002. It recommended the annulment of the proclamation of Atienza and his disqualification from continuing to hold office pursuant to Section 68 of the Election Code because of his own admission that he used taxpayers' money to hold dinner-seminars with barangay officials, young voters, youth leaders and local elective officials to get their votes.

Section 68 of the Election Code provides that anyone who is guilty of using public funds "shall be disqualified from continuing as a candidate or, if he has been elected, from holding public office."

"The law clearly provides that one who is guilty of using public funds, even if elected, shall be disqualified from holding public office," Quadra said. "The illegal proclamation of Atienza does not render moot and academic the disqualification case."

In its decision in Sunga vs. Comelec, the Supreme Court ruled that the proclamation of a candidate sought to be disqualified does not render moot and academic the petition for disqualification. "Time and again, this court has given imprimatur on the principle that the Comelec is with authority to annul any canvass and proclamation which was illegally made. The fact that a candidate proclaimed has assumed office, we have said, is no bar to the exercise of such power."

Quadra also pointed out that the conclusive evidence of irregularities discovered in the revision of ballots are more than sufficient. Hence, there is no necessity for the revision of the other precincts.

Furthermore, Quadra said, since Atienza is guilty of vote-buying, all his ballots are null and void and are to be considered as stray votes pursuant to the provisions of Section 6 of RA 6648 which provides that "any candidate who has been declared by final judgment to be disqualified shall not be voted for, and the votes cast for him shall not be counted."

Quadra further pointed out that Atienza has been notified by the director of the Comelec NCR of the promulgation of the findings and recommendation for the annulment of his proclamation and disqualification to continue holding office. The findings of the regional office are attached to the records of the case and are not considered confidential. The records are open for review by the public.

Quadra lamented the delay in the resolution of the disqualification case against Atienza. While it was filed on April 16, 2001, it was resolved by the Comelec NCR only on Jan. 29, 2002 and only after repeated demands for the early resolution of the case. He said that "obviously, efforts were made to unreasonably delay the resolution of the case by the Comelec."

Don't be surprised if it is finally resolved by the Comelec en banc a mere one week before the expiration of the term of Atienza in 2004, what with the Comelec commissioners fighting among themselves and all.

Atienza was found by the Comelec NCR to have spent various amounts of city government funds for "various activities designed to promote his candidacy in the May 14, 2001 elections." The biggest item involved the use of P1,686,877.50 of public funds to pay for dinner on March 23-25 and 27-29 with around 9,000 barangay officials at the Manila City Hall. There were four other such dinner-seminars and outings for other groups, all using public funds of slightly smaller amounts.

The petition for disqualification was filed by lawyer Amando Tetangco. The petition was accompanied by numerous disbursement vouchers from City Hall.

In his defense, Atienza admitted holding the dinners, seminars and outing using public funds but said that his acts were part of his "constant consultation and liaisons with barangay officials, the youth and NGOs necessary to address the pressing, relevant problems and needs of the community." He averred that his acts were "perfectly legal as they were sanctioned...by the Local Government Code of 1991."

"Government operations do not cease to be operative during the election period lest public interest be jeopardized," he said.

However, the Comelec ruled that those activities were "made as premature campaign activities in violation of Section 80 of the Omnibus Election Code."

If Atienza is disqualified, Vice Mayor Danny Lacuna will succeed him as mayor of Manila.

Alternatives

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I SAW Nicky Perlas last week around the JASMS area, shortly after my son's graduation from elementary school. I was surprised to see him. I hadn't seen him in a long time, indeed not after Edsa II. Nicky is renting a place there, which is where he stays when he is in Metro Manila. Which is not very often—only when he cannot help it. He stays most of the time in Iloilo, where he hails from and where he is currently doing environmental work, including practicing sustainable agriculture.

The last time I saw him, Nicky Perlas was the head of Pagbabago, a group that included such stalwarts as Jose Javier Reyes, Jim Paredes, Dan Songco, Dinky Soliman, Francis Pangilinan and many others, and which was at the forefront of the fight against Erap. Nicky was the near-unanimous choice of the group to head it, a man of formidable accomplishments and even more formidable character. He was the most credible person there, someone who did what he did for no other reason than that it was the right thing to do. He had no vested interests, he had no ulterior motives. Few are blessed with talent and integrity in this world, and Nicky is one of them. Pagbabago did well to see it.

I thought Nicky would be appointed to public office. Word was out then that he might become the next environment secretary, a post to which he seemed eminently fit. He had written books on the subject. There was only one problem: Nicky wasn't interested. And unfortunately, positions in the government bureaucracy never come to those who wait, or worse to those who show little interest in them. I've always had this theory that in any movement, whether a revolutionary one or a reformist one, mediocrity will always triumph over talent. That is so because the talented will have better things to do than fight like a mangy dog for the spoils that come with victory. It is the mediocre who will have the time, and energy, for it. That is how they always win out in populating bureaucracies.

Nicky did not become a pillar of government for reasons other than lack of opportunity and ability. He did not become so by choice. Indeed, he not only did not become a public official, which pretty nearly all those who organized themselves into anti-Erap groups and loudly advertised themselves as being so did—people in media were of course way ahead of them, but they were just doing their jobs—he did the unthinkable. Which was to leave Metro Manila, seat of power and wealth, to do what he had always preached, which was to show that Nature was there to befriend and not to bludgeon into submission.

Better the province, he said with the same unsinkable energy and enthusiasm he's always had since I've known him. The possibilities there are enormous. People are not so jaded and unwilling to try new things. People do not imagine they are old dogs who can't learn new tricks. I told him the same idea had been taking root in my mind, life of Metro Manila having become a little too oppressive over the years. Technology now freeing people from being rooted in one place, the possibility of relocating outside of Metro Manila, or at least living there part of the time, had become very real.

He said he was glad my columns still showed feistiness, and did not surrender to popular sentiment or bias. He begged me not to give up after I told him these last few months have been exceptionally frustrating for me, my sensation being that this country has a way of distinguishing itself only by making great leaps backward rather than forward. He said he particularly liked what I said about power some weeks ago. He himself could not understand why people seemed to be obsessed with it, or why they thought it could only come from a government position.

What can I say? I needed it, as the ad says, and better than a splash of cold water in the face in early morning to wake one up. The brief meeting (it lasted all of five minutes along with hellos and goodbyes) gave me a glimpse of vitality and hope again. More, it gave me a glimpse of possibility again. The alternative—as in alternative program, alternative way of doing things, alternative life itself—was possible. It was just a matter of having the courage and conviction to choose it.

I do not mean by this to deride all public officials, though I most assuredly mean to deride most of them, even friends who have allowed themselves to be changed by what they got into in the name of pragmatism rather than change what they got into in the name of idealism. I won't go as far as Frankie Sionil Jose to discourage the best and brightest from wanting to become president, but I would most seriously urge them to explore less profitable, but ultimately more rewarding (those are two different things) choices in life.

If I remember right, that is what the fundamental insight of NGOs consists of. Change is possible not just by wielding state power but by empowering the people. Democracy is not guaranteed by a wise government, it is guaranteed by a strong people. Wise governments come and go (though they seem to bypass this country more than others), a strong people remain. Unfortunately, that is an insight NGOs themselves do not always appreciate, the alacrity with which their leaders grab government posts being proof of it. I grant it is not easy refusing, and there is no lack of justification for it. But there is Life, with a capital L, outside of government, for those who are willing to resist the siren's call.

Nicky Perlas has shown so, as have some others, who however can be counted only by the fingers of one hand. But for me at least, that has made all the difference.

DepEd employees upset over service fee abolition

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

SOME friends in Congress such as Sen. Renato Cayetano and Rep. Prospero Pichay have urged the President to consider letting Comelec Chair Alfredo Benipayo go or suggested that the latter resign in order to restore peace in the poll body. This stand bothers me a lot. For one thing, if the readers will recall, the troubles in the Comelec began right after Benipayo came into office, as Commissioner Luz Tancangco and her group of Estrada appointees went into high gear to obstruct or oppose everything Benipayo and his two allies, all appointees of President Macapagal, did. Letting him go makes it look like he is being punished, although it is Tancangco and her group who have been the obstructionists, and in fact her name has been implicated in several allegedly anomalous deals. By arguing that her group has been confirmed by the Commission on Appointments whereas Benipayo and his group failed to hurdle it, the lawmakers are advocating appeasement of Tancangco et al. But appeasement, whether it is of Estrada or Tancangco, won't work. The feisty commissioner will doubtless give whoever succeeds Benipayo the same hell, since she does not want to give up control of the Comelec. The problem is not Benipayo but Tancangco.

* * *

Last Sunday's "Festival of Fathers" on the Ateneo campus in Quezon City gathered some 1,400 fathers to assess the strengths and weaknesses of their role in the family and how they could improve their relationship with their offspring. I noted, however, that many fathers present belonged to the older generation, when, as I gathered from Fr. Ruben Tanseco's lecture, one of the most acute needs of the youth of today is to be able to communicate more effectively with their parents, especially their fathers. In fact, Tanseco disclosed a McCann Erickson study showing how the youths' participation in prayer meetings and Bible studies has jumped tenfold, indicating that they are earnestly looking for answers to life's most serious questions.

This means that such a gathering as last Sunday's ought to get more of the younger fathers to participate, since they are the ones with children who are in their formative years. I broached this idea to Ambassador Henrietta de Villa, who has been tasked by Jaime Cardinal Sin to coordinate all activities leading up to the World Meeting of Families in Manila next Jan. 4, which Pope John Paul II is expected to attend. De Villa agreed, although she noted that the good thing is that most of the participating fathers belonged to basic communities with access to groups. Hopefully, whatever discernment they picked up at that gathering would be disseminated to their groups.

* * *

I found it curious that so much protest would be coming from the Department of Education (DepEd) about Secretary Raul Roco's administration, when so many innovations have been introduced during his tenure directly benefiting the teachers. One is the prompt payment of the salaries of some 25,000 DepEd personnel through the banks, thereby minimizing the need for them to borrow from private lenders. Roco also is now giving the clothing allowance in cash, and not in the form of textile, thus giving them more take-home money. Another is the completion of 857 new classrooms in 2001, three times more than in the previous year, which means more teachers will be hired. Still another is giving the school principals more power, e.g., to decide the type of uniforms their personnel can use. Roco recall that during a gathering of some 2,000 principals in Region IV recently, he was asked if their personnel could now use pants instead of skirts. His answer: "*Hindi bawal ang magpantalon. Ang bawal ay iyong wala.*"

* * *

Where are the complaints against Roco coming from? It seems that the source of discontent is the removal of the 2-percent "service fee" deducted from the salaries of teachers and personnel to pay for loans and insurance contracted by them with private lenders. This practice of deducting the service fee equivalent to 2 percent of the loan deductions has been around for a long while, and because this fee is being paid by about 80 percent of half a million employees, it comes up to quite an amount. In the old practice, the service fees went into a pool, part of which is paid to all those officials and employees who are involved, one way or the other, in the processing of the loan payments. This meant extra money for some 600 personnel in DepEd, from the secretary, the undersecretaries, bureau heads down to the lowest employee involved in the processing. In the central headquarters alone, some 400 personnel benefited from these extras, which, under the law, should not exceed 50 percent of the processing personnel's salaries. The rest of the money went to provident fund from which all DepEd employees can borrow. Roco claims that he distributed his share of the 2 percent service fee as bonus to his office staff last December.

* * *

The problem is that in this year's General Appropriations Act, this service fee was abolished by Congress not just for DepEd, but throughout the bureaucracy. To cushion the impact of the abolition, Roco allowed payment of overtime for the loan deduction processing. The problem is that now DepEd personnel have to work beyond their normal hours to get overtime pay, whereas before they could do the deductions during office hours. The DepEd people are very unhappy and blame Roco for it. I queried Undersecretary Pangan why only DepEd people are complaining when the practice has been abolished in all government offices, and he said it could be because DepEd is the biggest department, accounting for one-third of all government personnel.

Contempt and indulgence

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

THERE'S an interesting case in Cebu involving the staff of the Cebu Daily News, a "sister" publication of the INQUIRER, and Judge Fortunato de Gracia of the Regional Trial Court.

De Gracia has summoned CDN publisher Eileen Mangubat, editor in chief Thea Rinen, news editor Piedad Gonzalez and reporter Suzzane Salva to explain why they should not be cited for "indirect contempt" after publishing a story implicating him in an alleged bribery attempt.

This is but the latest wrinkle in an ongoing investigation that has embroiled the city prosecutor's office, and now even the local courts, in a bribery scandal. The Ombudsman is currently looking into a complaint that the lawyer of three suspected members of a Hong Kong triad implicated in an illegal drugs case had tried to bribe the three prosecutors handling the case. Based on the testimony of prosecutor Mary Ann Castro before the Ombudsman, the CDN published a banner story last Feb. 28 raising the possibility that the bribery try extended even to the judge in whose sala the case was being tried.

In its headline, the CDN had asked: "Judge bribed?" But it also accompanied the story with a cartoon showing the paper's mascot exclaiming "Disgrasya?" De Gracia read more into the headline and cartoon than just curiosity, saying "Disgrasya?" was not so much a question as a pun on his surname, a piece of "dismaying comic parody" meant to put him to ridicule.

* * *

WHAT I find most significant about this incident is that De Gracia seems bent on acting as plaintiff, prosecutor and judge in the case.

People who've had the misfortune of getting roped into litigation in this country tell me that in court the judge is the absolute ruler of his or her realm. You could be reprimanded, humiliated or even put behind bars for laughing or talking out of turn, or, especially for lawyers, just displeasing the judge with the way you look, talk or argue. Perhaps this is not a bad arrangement, since it gives the judge full authority to preside over usually contentious and heated exchanges between notoriously combative lawyers. But it is an arrangement ripe for abuse—by the judge.

What makes the Cebu case especially intriguing is that De Gracia seems more incensed with the allegedly contemptuous story and headline than with the linking of his name, by no less than a prosecutor, to a bribery attempt. The judge may be well within his rights to summon the CDN publisher and staff members to answer for their audacity in putting his reputation and integrity in doubt. But will finding the four women guilty of indirect contempt, which might earn them a brief stay in jail, serve the cause of truth and justice? Will it bring the people of Cebu any closer to finding out the truth about the bribery scandal?

If the Cebu media are hamstrung from investigating the judge, who can the people count on to get to the bottom of the story? I would think that if it's his name and reputation that truly concerns the judge, he would lead the effort to uncover the truth, not conceal it.

* * *

CONTRAST De Gracia's imperious summons with the behavior of the members of the special court of the Sandiganbayan overseeing the trial of former President Joseph Estrada.

In what lawyers and Bayan Muna party-list Rep. Satur Ocampo described as a "disturbing trend" and an unprecedented act, the presiding justice, Minita Nazario, practically pleaded with Erap to trust in their impartiality and commitment to justice. "On a pile of Bibles, we assure you that this court was not created to convict you," Nazario told Estrada.

"I bet you that was the first time (Nazario) ever said that to an accused," private prosecutor Leonard de Vera remarked. The first time any judge acted so deferentially toward anybody in his or her court, I might wager.

In fact, what many expected the court to do in the wake of Erap's mounting attacks not just on the Sandiganbayan but on the entire judicial system, all the way to the Supreme Court, was to slap him with a contempt citation. Like a child thrashing on the floor and throwing things around in a tantrum, Erap should have been thrown into a bare room and have the door locked behind him, so that he could not do damage to anyone or to himself until he came to his senses. Instead, the court chose to woo him and bribe him with assurances just so he would shut up and behave himself.

Nazario had better brace herself for the next outburst of temper. Spoiled kids—and indulgent parents—are doomed to repeat their mistakes until they learn from them.

* * *

CONGRATULATIONS to the five Datu Bago awardees this year, but especially to respected newspaperwoman Josie San Pedro, and Iris Melliza, president of the Holy Cross College of Davao City.

The Datu Bago awards are given every year to honor outstanding citizens of Davao on the anniversary of the city's founding.

I have known Iris for almost two decades, since we both became part of the national women's group Pilipina. In fact, Iris was for many years chairperson of Pilipina's Davao chapter. While she was connected with the Assumption School of Davao, Iris pioneered gender mainstreaming in the curriculum. Apart from her leadership in education, Iris has also been active in civic affairs, especially in voter education and peace initiatives.

Both Iris and Josie, I might add, have been staunch supporters of Abanse! Pinay, and they campaigned really hard for the party in the last elections.

Here we go again

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L.Harper

ABOUT a dozen years ago, public protest was able to stop the Department of Public Works and Highways from destroying the church of Loboc in Bohol, when a monstrous bridge in the process of construction by that agency would have cut across the front of the 18th century Jesuit-built church, possibly the loveliest among Bohol's architectural treasures. At the time, it was suggested that in the future the DPWH forewarn residents, parishioners and other interested parties that one of their projects could damage a historical or cultural landmark. Alas, since we appear to change officials as often as we change underwear and careers in government are viewed with jaundiced eyes by many, there is no continuity in our policies. From one administration to another, it's one continuous battle.

Now the Committee on Monuments and Sites of the National Commission on Culture and the Arts has been informed that the DPWH is at it again. It's not, however, a new project, just another that has been resurrected. About four or five years ago, architect Manuel Castro informed the committee that the DPWH intended to widen the main road cutting across the center of the town. Unfortunately for the town of Carcar, this particular plan will demolish five 100-year-old ***bahay na bato*** fronting the main highway. The wrecker's ball will also take down the Carcar Rotunda, effectively destroying the original town plan.

Accordingly Jerry Alfafara of Carcar wrote in September 2001 to engineer Crescencio Rocamora, project director of DPWH-PMO, regarding his misgivings. Rocamora replied in November to reassure Alfafara that "the above-mentioned structures will not be affected."

But if the drawing forwarded by the DPWH is correct, there is no way the structures will not be affected. There appears to be a gap between what the DPWH says it will do and what will actually happen.

Melly Almosara, deputy executive director of the National Historical Institute, has also expressed her concern over the widening of the south coastal road. The Committee on Monuments and Sites has as well written the DPWH. Let us now see whether the DPWH is as indifferent to culture and heritage as they have proven to be in the past.

One thing that can be said for us Filipinos: we sure sign a lot of laws, charters and agreements—and then promptly forget about them. It's like paying lip service to the law is enough, especially if following it proves inconvenient. Come to think of it, this also appears to be our attitude toward democracy and patriotism. We pay them a lot of lip service but in reality we're a feudal society whose loyalty is to the family first and foremost.

We have something called a Charter for the Conservation of Historic Towns and Urban Areas (to go by the fate of Mehan Gardens, *bale wala 'yan*) from which Almosara quotes: "All urban communities, whether they have developed gradually over time or have been created deliberately, are an expression of the diversity of societies throughout history."

What has been suggested by the concerned citizens of Carcar and by Almosara is that the DPWH divert the road somewhere else. "Traffic inside a historic town must be planned so that they do not damage the historic fabric or its environment. Major motorways penetrating a historic urban area should, as much as possible, be avoided. Thus, in the case of Carcar town, a diversion road can always be resorted to, not only to safeguard the town's heritage, but also for the security and well-being of the townspeople."

Truth to tell, this advice has never been followed by government. Witness Vigan and Taal. It isn't that it hasn't been suggested to the local government unit. But as usual, pressure from owners of tricycles, bus companies, jeepnies, mopeds spewing their noise and chemical pollution will ultimately triumph over common sense, health, love, sex, addiction—you name it. The name of the game is let's stay in power at any cost.

In the meantime, the Osmeñas are quarrelling among themselves so that not one of them will take up the cudgels for Carcar, treating it as a small-town issue rather Cebuano and ultimately Filipino heritage. The governor, Pablo Garcia, during whose earlier term the project was originally proposed doesn't appear to care either. It seems that this is a project of national government, and you know what they're like.

What legal recourse do the people of Carcar have? No doubt there are a number of illegal solutions, but we would like to believe that as a whole we are a peace-loving people, despite evidence to the contrary.

Even more unfortunate, since the faithful look up to them, are parish priests who are more interested in commercial gain than in historical preservation and the heritage of the people. In the town of Oslob also in Cebu, a former parish priest, Fr. Jose Motus, is supposed to have sold the old cemetery to the municipal government for P6,000 without "canonical approval" in the 1970s. The mayor quickly ordered three gardeners to turn it into a vegetable garden. Some townspeople remember that the gardeners "played" with the skeletal remains! So much for respect for the dead.

But the question is, of course, when will the government wake up to the fact that the people's heritage is a priority if they want to develop any kind of pride of country in the Filipino?

Danger in the dark

YOUNGBLOOD

Jodge

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—**Ed.**

I HAVE always loved darkness. I love staring at the various shades of twilight, as the shadows of the trees stare back at me. So I never considered a walk at night to be tinge with danger. At least not until one midsummer Friday night, when I was on my way home..

My home, by the way, is in a sitio in Compostela Valley called Bagsak, from the word *basacan*, which means "rice fields." We live in a 25-hectare farm, half of which is owned by my grandfather and the other half by a friend of his, who let my father manage it. Only a few families, mostly farm workers, inhabit the place. We are a close-knit neighborhood, even though our houses are some 200 meters away from each other, separated by trees and bends of the road.

It was in that place that I learned to trust the darkness. I used to brag to my friends that they could walk there at night without fear of being harassed. Until that fateful Friday night last summer which almost ended in a catastrophe, when the place that taught me to see the magic of the night taught me to distrust the darkness.

That night also stripped me of my arrogant belief and reliance on my instincts. I used to think that I could actually feel it when someone was coming or someone was watching or danger was hovering over my head. That belief made me feel invulnerable to danger. But at least in that one moment, I lost the gift. The spirits must have stripped me of the "power" I thought I possessed.

That night I did not make a call home to ask for someone to fetch me from the main highway. I was looking forward to enjoy the one-kilometer walk home alone. To me, it was magical to be ambushed by the shrill cry of cicadas while fireflies illumined my path. The experience was enough to release the stress accumulated from week's work in the city, which was a three-hour ride from my place.

When I signaled that I was getting off the bus, I noticed the surprise on the faces of other passengers. They must have seen that the street was dark and quite. There was no house nearby, no light post, and no one was waiting for me at the shed. One elderly woman asked me, "*Ikaw ra isa, day?* (Are you alone, lady?)" I saw the anxiety in her eyes, and I gave her a confident smile.

As the taillights of the bus disappeared in the night, darkness embraced me. I wasn't in the habit of using a flashlight. I thought I would be safer if I didn't use one since nobody would notice me walking in the dark. And as darkness engulfed me, I had no inkling that danger awaited me ahead.

I was half a-kilometer away from our house, savoring the peace I longed to feel, when I saw a flicker of light. I couldn't say if it came from a lighted cigarette or a firefly. But I trusted the place so much to entertain the idea that some with a cigarette was waiting with something evil in mind.

As I turned a bend in the road, I sensed footsteps behind me. Impulsively, I glanced back and saw a dark figure. That was when I started to feel scared and alarmed. I began to run, and so did he. One by one, the fine hair on my neck rose and bristled. I put on a burst of speed but at the very instant, he leapt to catch up with me. Then, I felt his body colliding with mine. The impact knocked me off my feet.

I must have lost consciousness for a few seconds after my head hit a rock. The next thing I knew, my attacker was dragging me down to a canal. I struggled to get back on my feet. I started to scream but he immediate clamped his hand over my mouth.

My fear was magnified and my heartbeat raced. I felt as if my veins would explode with terror. I could not believe that what I had heard on radio and seen on TV was actually happening to me.

He pinned me down with his body and started to kiss me. I was trying to think but my mind was frozen. Desperately, I pummeled his back and bit his hand, but he pulled his hand back and slapped me.

It was a good thing he did. It ignited a blaze of rage and fury! Pain! Numbness! Touching Hands! Nauseating breath! My fear was transformed into anger.

I struck at him, catching him in the face. As he tried to get on top of me again, I remembered what my father taught me about self-defense. I thrust my forefinger and middle finger, aiming for his eyes. Immediately I felt him loosening his grip. I broke free and began to run, but I did not get very far. The man caught me again.

With all my remaining strength, I kicked him between his thighs (something I had seen on TV). He cried out in pain, clutching his groin.

I fled from there, running faster than I had ever ran in my whole life. I didn't bother to look back and see if the man was still chasing me. All I could think of was to get away from the maniac. Only when I reached the gate of our house did I stop running.

My legs were aching, my breath came out rasping in my throat as I looked in agony at the empty road behind me. As I stared at the night, it seemed to mock me. Its mysterious darkness seemed to give the lie to my declaration that my home was a peaceful place.

We reported the incident to the authorities. They theorized that it was not a chance attack. The maniac must have known that I was coming home that night and planned it. Unfortunately, the police could not find anything that would help them identify my attacker.

As I write this, I still shudder at the memory of that night. In fact, the episode somehow seems to have become more terrifying.

That terrible experience made me lose my confidence and arrogance in walking at night all by myself. But when I cannot avoid walking alone at night, I make sure I have my cellular phone, a flashlight and a tube of tear gas.

That night taught me that danger exempts no one, sets no time, excludes no place, no matter how familiar and peaceful it may appear to be. That night taught me that to walk alone at night is to invite danger.

Jodge, 26, works in a university in Davao City.

THEY SAID

No co-existence

"Civilization and terrorism cannot co-exist. And by defeating terror, we will defend the peace of the world."
—US President George W. Bush

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Showing the stuff women are made of

AFTER THE CELEBRATION of the International Women's Day last March 8, we pay tribute to women of courage and conviction like nurse Fe Sanchez de Castro, who testified before the joint congressional hearing on the Lamitan incident. The grilling she went through last March 7 once more showed what stuff women are made of: courage and conviction, lighthearted humor but also earnestness and sincerity.

She and the other Lamitan witnesses, particularly the women, have sacrificed a lot, including their own and their families' security, to reveal to the Filipino people the circumstances surrounding the "escape" of Reghis Romero, Ma. Rhiza Rodriguez and RJ Recio and the walk to freedom of the Abu Sayyaf from the J. Torres Hospital on June 2, 2001. Five of the vital witnesses have gone missing, although Father Nacorda thinks they are just hiding.

"If liar has a face, I've seen it now," Brig. Gen. Romeo Dominguez said in reference to De Castro after she reiterated her testimony in the last hearing about the payoff to the military. If military bullying like this is allowed in formal investigation and hurled against a woman professional, what kind of treatment can poor uneducated Filipinas expect to get from our soldiers specially in the fields of combat? Even after he was reminded by Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. that nothing in De Castro's testimony directly mentioned him, Dominguez did not have the guts to act like an officer and a gentleman and apologize to her.

If Dominguez was looking for a liar, he didn't have to look far. He could have turned around to confront his own statements of supposed innocence.

The contempt for human rights, law and order by the ASG bandits and kidnappers has sadly crept into the behavior of government officials. Mayor Sakib Salajin of Maluso has proudly stated that his bodyguards had abducted four wives of ASG members along with male relatives to force the bandits to release their hostages, an act which Basilan Governor Wahab Akbar also committed in the 2000 during the Sipadan hostage drama. But these local officials have yet to be charged for their criminal acts.

The military must be getting uneasy with the results of the last investigation of the Lamitan incident. Apart from De Castro, a Dos Palmas kidnap victim admitted paying P1 million in August 2001 to secure the release of his sister-in-law. Likewise the report that businessmen Reghis Romero did not escape but was released by the ASG was confirmed on the basis of the revelation of RJ Recio, another Dos Palmas kidnap victim.

We salute the resolve of De Castro as well as the other witnesses in the Lamitan incident. The government should listen to their testimony objectively and out of real concern for peace in Basilan. We ask the government to form an independent investigation committee to ensure impartiality and thoroughness in the investigation of the Lamitan incident.

In the meantime, the military officials involved in the case such as Dominguez and Col. Juvenal Narcise should take a leave of absence. Better yet, they should resign.

—MAX M. DE MESA, deputy executive director for Mindanao, Task Force Detainees of the Philippines, No. 45 St. Mary St., Cubao, Quezon City

Life begins at 80

I WOULD like to thank Honesto General for his concern and for writing often about us senior citizens and retirees.

He is never more correct than when he says that "retirees with their wealth of experience and expertise are a resource the country can ill afford to waste." But on the other hand, the younger ones in the work force have to move up the ladder and so older folks have to give way to them, although I agree that at 60 or 65, many are still mentally and physically fit, and to retire at that age seems such a foolish idea.

We can retire at 60 or 65, but we can still be useful and happy in other activities no matter if these are not financially rewarding. And if we survive until we are 80, everybody is surprised that we are still alive. They treat us with respect just for having lived so long. Actually they seem surprised that we can still walk and talk sensibly.

To many, retirement is a time to sit back and watch the world pass by or sit on a rocking chair and watch TV. For some like me, it means getting on with life and doing something more interesting and useful.

After a few years spent in visiting some of my children who are doing well in other countries, I took care of a bedridden spouse for five and a half years. This did not keep me from getting involved in community affairs. I was lucky to find one in an organization of concerned homeowners' associations whose main endeavor is to improve the quality of life in our homes. At 81, I am with NGOs whose varied advocacies have led me to the City Council, to the halls of Congress and to the Senate. My experience in government service and expertise gained from membership in professional organizations, especially as delegate to world conferences, have been put to good use in my present work.

Folks, try to make it to 80. It's the best time of life. People forgive you for anything. If you ask me, life begins at 80. I am looking forward to my next 20 years, God willing.

—CONSUELO D. SISON, 10 Alpha Rd., Alpha Vill., Diliman, Quezon City

Awards

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

THE RATHER noisy audience suddenly became very quiet as people noticed the old man in *barong* ambling up the aisle with great difficulty. The hush was followed by murmuring, which in turn gave way to applause.

The occasion was the annual awarding ceremonies of UP Diliman's College of Social Sciences and Philosophy (CSSP) and the old man had come forward to claim a posthumous loyalty award for his son, Rodrigo Villela. Mang Rod served for more than 20 years at CSSP's "101," the college's nerve center for students. He started in utilities but moved on to operating mimeographing machines (remember those contraptions?) but did all kinds of clerical work as well. He died three years ago, and now his father, himself a victim of a recent accident, was walking that extra mile to honor his son, and the university.

Because I've taken up an administrative position at the college, I've been forced to attend to more ceremonial duties, which can sometimes be tedious. In a country where many awards are bought, or where the "winners" nominate themselves, I usually decline when asked to attend such ceremonies.

UP's recognition rites could be an exception. Away from the glare of cameras, the ceremonies allow us to honor people who have dedicated their entire lives to government service.

As our dean, Cynthia Bautista, pointed out, many of our faculty members and almost all of our students weren't born yet when they began serving the university. Two personnel from her own office, Alejandro Bagtas and Rafael Esteves, received awards for 25 years of service.

Even more amazing were Rita Gunabe and Zenaida Quiray, both from the UP Population Institute, who have served 35 years. As I watched them getting their awards, I thought about how often I have seen them whenever I dropped by their department, and yet had never gotten their names. The recognition rites take on a literal meaning, allowing us to overcome the impersonal atmosphere of large institutions. Suddenly, the faces have names.

All these personnel started working quite young, still wet behind the ears as the expression goes. Eventually, they become "Kuya" and "Ate," and later, "Mang" and "Aling." I think of our own Violy at anthropology, who refuses to become "Aling." The other week she was asking why we needed to computerize files and I thought, yes indeed, why computerize when it takes longer to boot up the computer than just asking Violy to look up the grades of a student who took a course during the 1st semester, 1979-1980. If professors are thought of as walking encyclopedias, the administrative secretaries are walking filing cabinets!

It's not just administrative personnel. A loyalty award went this year to Sweet Cabanilla (Israel is his legal name) who has served the university for 25 years and, despite lack of funds, manages our anthropology museum (yes we have one!) and does his own community outreach, getting students in public high schools interested in archaeology.

Sweet wasn't around to pick up his award, and he shrugged his shoulders when I asked if he got the plaque. He's pretty much like many of our university staff, publicity-shy and content seeing students happy.

Nevertheless, as we see with the father of Mang Rod, the awards do mean something, if not for the awardee, at least for the family. That's why parents show up, too, when their children make it as a university or college scholar. (These are honors given for achieving a certain grade point average, the university scholar being a higher distinction.) When I was still in college, caught up in the activism of our era, I looked at the awards as "bourgeois" and never bothered to pick up my certificates, but now, older and I hope wiser, I do appreciate that for many families, the awards are important, almost a testament to long years of scrimping and sacrificing by parents, or a *kuya*, or *ate*.

I've been thinking, too, given the importance of these rituals, about how we might need to add a bit more solemnity to the ceremonies. During our CSSP recognition rites, there was a processional for the students but they sauntered in almost awkwardly, not sure what was expected of them. I think it was fine they came in UP's standard gear of T-shirts, jeans and sandals, but maybe there are ways to bring in some pomp without becoming pompous and tedious.

I thought of that pomp again during the closing ceremonies for our CSSP Week, when we had one of those quintessential Filipino institutions, a choir, with a self-explanatory name: UP Faculty, Alumni and Friends Chorale. Someone offered an extended description for the group, whispering: "Golden Girls." Actually, it wasn't all-female but yes, it was composed mainly of a much earlier generation of faculty members.

As the choir serenaded us, I suddenly realized that there were other "Golden Girls" in the audience. To name just one of them, there was Prof. Gelia Castillo, a pioneer in rural sociology and participatory research, who had come in all the way from Los Baños. I had to ask other professors to tell me who the others were, and that's when I realized there was a generation gap. I am not that young but I know many of UP's great professors only by name, not by face.

That's when I realized perhaps our recognition awards would be even more useful if our institutional pioneers could grace the ceremonies, their presence providing not just pomp but a sense of continuity among generations and between the academic and administrative communities. Beyond the pieces of paper that are the awards, recognition rites could then function to build institutional memory, and solidarity.

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Deadline nears for Roco's new curriculum

By Donna S. Cueto

THE DEPARTMENT of Education is trying to beat a self-imposed June 2002 deadline to train all 400,000 public school teachers so they could teach the controversial "Basic Education Curriculum," which had been revised to include only five learning areas: Filipino, English, science, mathematics and Makabayan.

Ironically, no public school teacher has yet been reached by the training, as the DepEd had so far trained only the 16 regional directors and their assistant directors, 145 superintendents and assistant superintendents.

Still to be reached in the next two months are the 2,200 supervisors, 40,000 principals and 400,000 public school teachers nationwide—what educators called the critical target as they would be the ones directly teaching students about the new curriculum.

Education Secretary Raul Roco said the curriculum would have to be implemented by June 2002 nationwide, ignoring calls from the Alliance of Concerned Teachers to shelve this because of lack of preparation.

Suspended

He has embarked on his plan to train the teachers by May, and would not be stopped by any opposition.

Roco has even suspended a DepEd official, Director Alice Panares, who believed that there should be more consultations done with outside stakeholders such as the experts in the affected fields, presidents of universities, and academicians, among others.

Roco suspended her for 15 days on Feb. 6 for insubordination, without doing any investigation, saying that she did not follow his instructions to stop the consultations.

"Those final consultations. As I've said, since July (2001) we've been talking. Talking does not bring results. We have been pushing the organization," Roco said in a previous interview.

For Roco, anyone who would not follow his order, particularly in the implementation of the new curriculum, would be acted upon.

Art raffle for young scholars

WORKS of several famous Filipino artists will be the main features in a unique charity raffle at the Avellana Art Gallery on March 23.

The raffle is a unique concept. Each ticket holder is assured of winning. Everybody goes home with a piece. Some lucky participants will even win artwork of higher value than others.

Among the artists are Mauro Malang Santos, Ang Kiukok, Danny Dalena, Claude Tayag, Alan and Ivi Cosio, Lao Lianbien, Dan Raralio, Hermes Alegre, Rachy Cuna, Jeanne Tan, Impy Pilapil, John and Tessie Pettyjohn, and Florencio Concepcion.

Screening the artwork for the raffle will be Alberto Juan Avellana, an art expert, who acts as the project curator.

The raffle is an undertaking of the St. Theresa's College Manila High School '78 Foundation to mark the silver jubilee of the class next year.

Out of the proceeds, the organizers will create an endowment fund for a scholarship program for poor and deserving students. The scholarships will cover from elementary up to high school.

There are two categories of the artwork, with ticket prices at P10,000 or P20,000.

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CEBU	5J - 557	Daily	DC9	0130	0240	P2,899	P2,569	P2,309
	5J - 559	Daily	B757	0500	0610			
	5J - 559	Daily	B757*	0500	0610	P3,219	P3,019	-
	5J - 561	Daily	DC9	0700	0810	P2,899	P2,569	P2,309
	5J - 563	Daily	DC9	0900	1010			
	5J - 565	Daily	DC9	1100	1210			
	5J - 567	Daily	DC9	1300	1410			
	5J - 569	M/Th/F/Sun	DC9	1500	1610			
	5J - 569	Tu/W/Sat	B757	1500	1610			
	5J - 569	Tu/W/Sat	B757*	1500	1610	P3,219	P3,019	-
*Business Class Available	5J - 571	Daily	DC9	1700	1810	P2,899	P2,569	P2,309
DAVAO	5J - 961	Daily	DC9	0500	0640	P3,667	P3,239	-
	5J - 963	M/Th/F/Sun	DC9	1000	1140			
	5J - 963	Tu/W/Sat	B757	1000	1140			
	5J - 963	Tu/W/Sat	B757*	1000	1140	P4,039	P3,839	-
	5J - 965	Daily	DC9	1100	1240	P3,667	P3,239	
*Business Class Available	5J - 967	Daily	DC9	1600	1740			
CAGAYAN de ORO	5J - 381	Daily	DC9	0510	0635	P3,645	P3,239	-
	5J - 383	Daily	DC9	0930	1055			
	5J - 385	Daily	DC9	1300	1425			
TACLOBAN	5J - 651	Daily	DC9	0610	0720	P2,899	P2,569	-
	5J - 655	Daily	DC9	1210	1320			
	5J - 657	Daily	DC9	1410	1520			
ILOILO	5J - 451	Daily	DC9	0500	0600	P2,779	P2,449	-
	5J - 453	Daily	DC9	0720	0820			
	5J - 455	Daily	DC9	0955	1055			
	5J - 457	Daily	DC9	1325	1425			
	5J - 459	Daily	DC9	1600	1700			
BACOLOD	5J - 473	Daily	DC9	0610	0710	P2,779	P2,449	-
	5J - 475	Daily	DC9	1000	1100			
	5J - 477	Daily	DC9	1350	1450			
	5J - 479	Daily	DC9	1650	1750			
ZAMBOANGA	5J - 851	Daily	DC9	0620	0750	P3,667	P3,239	-
ROXAS	5J - 373	Daily	DC9	0530	0630	P2,539	P2,199	-
DUMAGUETE	5J - 627	Daily	DC9	1340	1450	P2,899	P2,569	-
KALIBO	5J - 339	Daily	DC9	0900	0950	P2,899	P2,569	-
	5J - 341	Daily	DC9	0950	1040			
BUTUAN --Effective 23 March 2002	5J - 787	Tu/W/Sat	DC9	1000	1125	P3,645	P3,239	P2,919

ORIGIN: CEBU

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	ONE-WAY FARES		
						NORMAL	VALUE	PROMOTIONAL
MANILA	5J - 558	Daily	DC9	0500	0610	P2,899	P2,569	P2,309
	5J - 560	Daily	B757	0700	0810			
	5J - 560	Daily	B757*	0700	0810	P3,219	P3,019	-
	5J - 562	Daily	DC9	0900	1010	P2,899	P2,569	P2,309
	5J - 564	Daily	DC9	1100	1210			
	5J - 566	Daily	DC9	1300	1410			
	5J - 568	Daily	DC9	1500	1610			
	5J - 570	M/Th/F/Sun	DC9	1700	1810			
	5J - 570	Tu/W/Sat	B757	1700	1810			
	5J - 570	Tu/W/Sat	B757*	1700	1810	P3,219	P3,019	-
*Business Class Available	5J - 572	Daily	DC9	1900	2010	P2,899	P2,569	P2,309
DAVAO	5J - 593	Daily	DC9	0800	0850	P2,589	P2,249	-
	5J - 597	Daily	DC9	1450	1540			
ZAMBOANGA	5J - 431	Tu/Th/Sat	DC9	1005	1100	P2,649	P2,319	-
ILOILO	5J - 164	Daily	DC9	1750	1825	P2,099	P1,759	-
BACOLOD	5J - 126	M/W/Th/Sat	DC9	1100	1130	P1,879	P1,539	-
CLARK	5J - 588	Tu/F/Sun	DC9	1100	1220	P2,995	P2,669	-

ORIGIN: DAVAO

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	ONE-WAY FARES		
						NORMAL	VALUE	PROMOTIONAL
MANILA	5J - 962	Daily	DC9	0720	0900	P3,667	P3,239	-
	5J - 964	Tu/W/Sat	B757	1220	1400			
	5J - 964	M/Th/F/Sun	DC9	1220	1400			
	5J - 964	Tu/W/Sat	B757*	1220	1400	P4,039	P3,839	-
	5J - 966	Daily	DC9	1320	1500	P3,667	P3,239	-
*Business Class Available	5J - 968	Daily	DC9	1820	2000			
CEBU	5J - 594	Daily	DC9	0930	1020	P2,589	P2,249	-
	5J - 598	Daily	DC9	1620	1710			
ILOILO --via Cebu	5J - 598/164	Daily	DC9	1620	1825	P3,645	P3,195	-
ZAMBOANGA	5J - 393	M/W/F/Sun	DC9	1010	1110	P2,649	P2,319	-

ORIGIN: BACOLOD

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	ONE-WAY FARES		
						NORMAL	VALUE	PROMOTIONAL
MANILA	5J - 474	Daily	DC9	0800	0900	P2,779	P2,449	-
	5J - 476	Daily	DC9	1150	1250			
	5J - 478	Daily	DC9	1540	1640			
	5J - 480	Daily	DC9	1840	1940			
CEBU	5J - 125	M/W/Th/Sat	DC9	1220	1250	P1,879	P1,539	-

ORIGIN: BUTUAN *NEW DESTINATION*

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	ONE-WAY FARES		
						NORMAL	VALUE	PROMOTIONAL
MANILA --Effective 23 March 2002	5J - 788	Tu/W/Sat	DC9	1205	1330	P3,645	P3,239	P2,919

ORIGIN: ILOILO

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	ONE-WAY FARES		
						NORMAL	VALUE	PROMOTIONAL
MANILA	5J - 454	Daily	DC9	0900	1000	P2,779	P2,449	-
	5J - 456	Daily	DC9	1135	1235			
	5J - 458	Daily	DC9	1505	1605			
	5J - 460	Daily	DC9	1740	1840			
	5J - 462	Daily	DC9	1905	2005			
CEBU	5J - 161	Daily	DC9	0640	0715	P2,099	P1,759	-
DAVAO --via Cebu	5J - 161/593	Daily	DC9	0640	0850	P3,645	P3,195	-

ORIGIN: TACLOBAN

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	ONE-WAY FARES		
						NORMAL	VALUE	PROMOTIONAL
MANILA	5J - 652	Daily	DC9	0800	0910	P2,899	P2,569	-
	5J - 656	Daily	DC9	1400	1510			
	5J - 658	Daily	DC9	1600	1710			

ORIGIN: CLARK

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	ONE-WAY FARES		
						NORMAL	VALUE	PROMOTIONAL
CEBU	5J - 589	Tu/F/Sun	DC9	1300	1420	P2,995	P2,669	-

ORIGIN: ZAMBOANGA

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	ONE-WAY FARES		
						NORMAL	VALUE	PROMOTIONAL
MANILA	5J - 852	Daily	DC9	1150	1320	P3,667	P3,239	-
CEBU	5J - 432	Tu/Th/Sat	DC9	0830	0925	P2,649	P2,319	-
DAVAO	5J - 394	M/W/F/Sun	DC9	0830	0930	P2,649	P2,319	-

ORIGIN: CAGAYAN DE ORO

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	ONE-WAY FARES		
						NORMAL	VALUE	PROMOTIONAL
MANILA	5J - 382	Daily	DC9	0715	0840	P3,645	P3,239	-
	5J - 384	Daily	DC9	1135	1300			
	5J - 386	Daily	DC9	1505	1630			

ORIGIN: ROXAS

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	ONE-WAY FARES		
						NORMAL	VALUE	PROMOTIONAL
MANILA	5J - 374	Daily	DC9	0710	0810	P2,539	P2,199	-

ORIGIN: DUMAGUETE

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	ONE-WAY FARES		
						NORMAL	VALUE	PROMOTIONAL
MANILA	5J - 628	Daily	DC9	1530	1640	P2,899	P2,569	-

ORIGIN: KALIBO

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	ONE-WAY FARES		
						NORMAL	VALUE	PROMOTIONAL
MANILA	5J - 340	Daily	DC9	1030	1120	P2,899	P2,569	-
	5J - 342	Daily	DC9	1120	1210			

INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS

FROM - TO	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA
MANILA - HONGKONG	5J - 112	Daily	B757	0850	1050
	5J - 114*	W/Sat	B757	1345	1545
	5J - 118	Daily	B757	1640	1840
HONG KONG - MANILA	5J - 113	Daily	B757	1150	1350
	5J - 115*	W/Sat	B757	1710	1910
	5J - 119	Daily	B757	1940	2140
MANILA - SEOUL	5J - 194	M/F/Sun	B757	1310	1810
	5J - 1944**	Th	B757	1310	1810
SEOUL - MANILA	5J - 195	M/F/Sun	B757	1915	2215
	5J - 1955**	Th	B757	1915	2215

*Available starting 27 March 2002
**Available 21 & 28 March 2002

NOTES:
- *All tickets are REFUNDABLE, REROUTABLE and UPGRADABLE to valid higher fare types. All issued tickets are NON-TRANSFERRABLE.*
- *Insurance surcharge of P250 per sector is applicable to all fare types.*
- *Child's fare and other regular discounts are applicable to Normal Fares only.*
- *All fares are subject to government approval and are exclusive of government tax.*
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and well in Philippine AXA Life. Forged by the alliance of two financial giants - AXA, the world's largest insurer and

MESSAGES

Warmest felicitations to the organizers and awardees of the Philippine AXA Life's 25th Annual Agency Awards.

I congratulate the men and women of Philippine AXA Life for promoting the growth of the life insurance industry. I urge the awardees to continue their dedication and hard work to ensure the strong financial condition of your company.

In line with our goal to eradicate poverty, we support the growth and development of the insurance industry in its mission to help our countrymen in times of need.

I hope the players in the life insurance industry will continue their relentless commitment to bring financial security to our countrymen. I encourage you to adopt pro-poor terms and expand your network to help more people meet their insurance needs.

GMArroyo

HON. GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
PRESIDENT
Republic of the Philippines

The life insurance industry is founded on nobility— for the benefit it sets forth to bring to every Filipino household and for the persistence and consistence of the people who are determined to propagate this industry's unparalleled benefits.

I feel proud and honored as I congratulate the 47 Annual Awards winners of Philippine AXA Life. The success you reap bespeaks of the triumphs our industry continues to achieve. I recognize the hard work and efforts you put into your profession to ensure that many will be enlightened to the beauty of life insurance. Indeed, ours is a business primarily positioned to bring financial security and stability as we ensure that no widow or children will suffer tremendous financial loss due to the death or disability of a head of a family.

I enjoin Philippine AXA Life and its league of 2001 achievers to continue the campaign to life that you have started. As the whole industry joins together in educating the Filipinos of our industry's value to nation building, we contribute to the vision that our country will never be beset with troubles and pains.

Again, to the Annual Awards winners of Philippine AXA Life, my sincerest greetings. You are indeed our modern day heroes!

ATTY. EDUARDO T. MALINIS
COMMISSIONER
Insurance Commission

This year 2001 was indeed a truly memorable year for Philippine AXA Life. The company's small successes during the year eventually built up into a major performance achievement that we can all be truly proud of. This record-breaking year was made possible by the concerted effort of all sectors of the company.

On March 19, 2002, the Annual Awards night will honor forty-seven men and women who represent the Agencies Division in its contribution to such a remarkable year. While the previous year was riddled with numerous challenges and changes, these winners displayed resilience and focus on their respective commitments. Their undaunted spirit is a genuine display of the true value of champions. I am truly delighted to be surrounded by such triumphant individuals.

May your recognition in the Annual Awards inspire you to move towards attaining greater success!

ELVIRA ONG CHAN
CHAIRPERSON
Philippine AXA Life

Philippine AXA Life pays tribute to the lofty accomplishments of its 47 recipients of the Annual Awards in a night of splendor at the ballroom of Dusit Hotel Nikko. It is a celebration captured aptly by its theme, "Elements of Success."

It is a night inspired by the forces that bring forth success - knowledge, integrity, passion and skill. These forces are likened to the elements of the universe — air, water, fire and earth. Each element is vital to the other to truly form a universe or success.

I give full praises to the men and women of Philippine AXA Life who displayed relentless vigor to attain success in this career. Your passion for life and life insurance moved you to pursue needed knowledge and skill to excel in your field. The purity of your intention translated to business integrity is what sets you apart.

To our Annual Awards winners, my sincerest congratulations for your commendable 2001 sales performance. God made all these things possible for us. Return to Him the glory by inspiring your colleagues in the company and in the industry to replicate your accomplishments.

VICTOR P. QUISUMBING
PRESIDENT
Philippine AXA Life

Richard Chua Chiaco
Golden Life
Sales Underwriter of the Year

Sales Underwrite

Chairman's Club

Richard Chua Chiaco
Golden Life

Caridad Yu
Auspicious Life

Juls Lorenzo
Cabuyao/Metro

Emrie Rafallo
Gatmen/Metro Life

Lornilia Fabros
Alvarez/Fajardo

Rookie Underwriter Award

Erwin Concepcion
Golden Life

Steven Gocor
Golden Life

Maria Monica Osero
Manning/Postrero

Marc Lorenzo
Caganan/Fajardo

Francisco Laforteza
Lorenzo/Metro Life

James Louie Go
Auspicious Life

Chona Dayanghirang
Dayanghirang/Mt Apo Eagles

Executive League

Roldan Jamindang
Metro Life

Aurea Cardiño
Fajardo

Bernardita Gatmen
Metro Life

Agency Mana

Yolanda Abalos
Fajardo

Teresita Fajardo
Fajardo

Elita Nav
Metro Lif

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Magsaysay Houlder Insurance Broker Inc.

MARSH
Marsh Philippines, Inc.

Apollo Risk Managers
Insurance Broker

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Life's success can finally be told.

ealth. The same qualities that made 47 men and women part of our Annual Awardees this year. These elements are alive
letobank, the country's biggest bank, it continues to provide world-class insurance products and services to every Filipino.

Roldan Jamindang
Metro Life
Agency Manager of the Year

Mabini Fajardo Sr.
Fajardo
Branch Manager of the Year

rs

President's Club

erly Yu
en/Metro Life

Annalyn Talens
Alvarez/Fajardo

Marxchelin Borra
Golden Life

Ronald Tan
Golden Life

Carla Chan
Fabie/Postrero

Branch Managers

Branch Manager's Achievement Award

Mabini Fajardo Sr.
Fajardo

Emily Tan
Golden Life

Ruben Navea
Metro Life

Rolando Tiongco
Tiongco

Regular Business Specialist

Romano Cardiño
Cardiño/Fajardo

Caridad Yu
Auspicious Life

Ronald Tan
Golden Life

Marxchelin Borra
Cabuyao/Navea

Eduardo Delfino III
Navea/Metro Life

Richard Chua Chiaco
Golden Life

Emrie Rafallo
Gatmen/Metro Life

Carla Chan
Fabie/Postrero

Marcial Viran
Auspicious Life

Lorenzo Chung
Auspicious Life

*Carmen Ramos
Gatmen/Metro Life

Salary Deduction Specialist

Juls Lorenzo
Cabuyao/Metro Life

Lilibeth Entino
Abalos/Fajardo

Joseph Ricafort
J.Fajardo/Fajardo

Marylou Gayloa
Gines/Tiongco

Agency Managers

ger's Achievement Award

Gayle Alvarez
Fajardo

Jose Fajardo Jr.
Fajardo

Ronald Ronquillo
Tiongco

*Ma. Elenita Vedar
Tiongco

Rookie Agency Manager's Achievement Award

Lydia Adequiña
Phua

Eleanor Fabie
Postrero

Ildefonso Dorimon
Solid Life

Erlina Elmido
Solid Life

Jose Lorenzo
Metro Life

John Tuazon
Batul

Milagros Manning
Postrero

Vicenta Chung
Auspicious

* not in photo

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Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
BATASAN COMPLEX, QUEZON CITY

COMPLAINT FOR IMPEACHMENT OF SUPREME COURT JUSTICES

By:
ANTI-GRAFT LEAGUE OF THE PHILS., INC.
and
PUBLIC INTEREST CENTER, INC.

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Batasan Pambansa Complex
Quezon City

TO : THE HONORABLE MEMBERS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
RE : IMPEACHMENT OF 15 SUPREME COURT JUSTICES

COMPLAINT FOR IMPEACHMENT

Quo animo- a government of laws and not of men ?

This is a very unpopular and lonely non-partisan stand for the rule of law and a continuing crusade to defend and uphold the Constitution˙. It is axiomatic that all citizens of the Republic, especially Supreme Court Justices, must respect the "laws of the land".

Counsel wanted to retire from his risky undertaking in crusading against corruption of high government officials; he already suffered 2-year martial law imprisonment, ambuscades, assassination staring at the ugly face of death; again for impeaching Supreme Court Justices, his law practice is finished; he is really tired and frustrated; but now his conscience would not rest in peace because the Constitution has been wantonly violated and prostituted; the highest public interest is involved in the unabated raging constitutional crisis; President Estrada is merely an incidental party in this important constitutional controversy which must be openly ventilated; and it is not yet too late in the day but most auspicious now to discuss publicly unpopular views before our people in defense of our democratic system of government.

The charges for impeachment

We respectfully charge the following Justices of the Supreme Court: **HILARIO G. DAVIDE, JR.**, Chief Justice, and **Justices JOSUE N. BELLOSILLO, JOSE A.R. MELO, REYNATO S. PUNO, JOSE C. VITUG, SANTIAGO A. KAPUNAN, VICENTE M. MENDOZA, ARTEMIO V. PANGANIBAN, LEONARDO A. QUISUMBING, BERNARDO P. PARDO˙, ARTURO B. BUENA, CONSUELO YNARES-SANTIAGO, MINERVA GONZAGA-REYES˙, SABINO R. DE LEON, JR. and ANGELINA SANDOVAL-GUTIERREZ** with the following grounds for impeachment:

I. Culpable violation of the Constitution and betrayal of public trust:

"Sec. 2. The President, the Vice-President, the Members of the Supreme Court, the Members of the Constitutional Commissions, and the Ombudsman may be removed from office, on impeachment for, and conviction of, culpable violation of the Constitution, treason, bribery, graft and corruption, other crimes, or betrayal of public trust. x x x." (Art. XI, Constitution)

"Sec. 8. In case of death, permanent disability, removal from office, or resignation of the President, the Vice-President shall become the President to serve the unexpired term. In case of death, permanent disability, removal from office, or resignation of both the President and Vice-President, the President of the Senate or, in case of his inability, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, shall then act as President until the President or Vice-President shall have been elected and qualified." (Art. VII, Constitution)

"Sec. 11. Whenever the President transmits to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives his written declaration that he is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, and until he transmits to them a written declaration to the contrary, such powers and duties shall be discharged by the Vice-President as Acting President.

"Whenever a majority of all the Members of the Cabinet transmit to the President of the Senate and to the Speaker of the House of Representatives their written declaration that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, the Vice-President shall immediately assume the powers and duties of the office as Acting President.

"Thereafter, when the President transmits to the President of the Senate and to the Speaker of the House of Representatives his written declaration that no inability exists, he shall reassume the powers and duties of his office. Meanwhile, should a majority of all the members of the Cabinet transmit within five days to the President of the Senate and to the Speaker of the House of Representatives their written declaration that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, the Congress shall decide the issue. For that purpose, the Congress shall convene, if it is not in session, within forty-eight hours, in accordance with its rules and without the need of call.

"If Congress, within ten days after receipt of the last written declaration, or, if not in session, within twelve days after it is required to assemble determines by a two thirds vote of both houses voting separately, that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, the Vice-President shall act as President, otherwise, the President shall continue exercising the powers and duties of his office." (Art. VII, Constitution)

II. Violation of Article XI on Accountability of Public Officers:

"Sec. 1. Public office is a public trust. Public Officers and employees must at all times be accountable to the people, serve them with utmost responsibility, integrity, loyalty, and efficiency, act with patriotism and justice, and lead modest lives."

III. Violation of Section 4, R.A. No. 6713:

"Sec. 4. Norms of Conduct of Public Officials and Employees. – (a) Every public official and employee shall observe the following as standards of personal conduct in the discharge and execution of official duties:

x x x x x x

"(g) Commitment to democracy. – Public officials and employees shall commit themselves to the democratic way of life and values, maintain the principle of public accountability, and manifest by deeds the supremacy of civilian authority over the military. They shall at all times uphold the Constitution and put loyalty to country above loyalty to persons or party."

IV. Violation of their sacred Oath of Office which pledges:

"Panunumpa sa Katungkulan

"Ako, si_______________________________________, ng ____ na nahirang sa katungkulan bilang________________________________, ay taimtim na nanunumpa (o nagpapatunay) na ilalapat ko ang katarungan nang walang pagkiling sa sino mang tao at ipatatamasa ang pantay na karapatan sa mahirap at mayaman; na tutuparin ko nang buong husay at katapatan, sa abot ng aking kakayahan, ang mga tungkulin ng aking kasalukuyang katungkulan; ***na aking itataguyod at ipagtatanggol ang Saligang Batas ng Pilipinas***; na tunay na mananalig at tatalima ako rito; at susundin ko ang mga batas, mga kautusang legal at mga dekretong pinaiiral ng mga sadyang itinakdang maykapangyarihan ng Republika ng Pilipinas; at kusa kong babalikatin ang pananagutang ito, nang walang ano mang pasubali o hangaring umiwas.

"KASIHAN NAWA AKO NG DIYOS."

The above-named Justices committed the charged impeachable offenses when they conspired to declare Joseph Ejercito Estrada as having resigned his Presidency and Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to have filled up this position. Respondent Justices committed this totally unwarranted phenomenal act when they decided G.R. No. 146738, "Joseph Ejercito Estrada versus Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo" last 2 March 2001. The respondent Justices ruled En Banc that Estrada resigned, when in fact there was no resignation; that they declared that there was vacancy in the Office of the President when it is not their constitutional duty to do so; that the oath taking and assumption of the Office of President by Vice-President Macapagal-Arroyo was legitimate and constitutional when in fact it was in blatant violation and prostitution of the Constitution; that this Decision was ultra vires. It shows beyond question ***that the respondent Justices did not act with utmost responsibility, integrity and efficiency. They did not "uphold the Constitution"*** in violation of the laws of the land. ***They violated their oath of office.*** Respondent Justices rendered this Decision without jurisdiction and without any factual or legal basis and thereby they have caused incalculable and irreparable damage to our democratic institutions.

Material antecedent

Rule VI of the Rules of Procedure on Impeachment Trials in the Senate of the Philippines provides:

> **"The x x x Chief Justice when presiding on the trial may rule on all questions of evidence including, but not limited to, questions of materiality, relevancy, competency or admissibility of evidence and incidental questions, which ruling shall stand as the judgment of the Senate, unless a Member of the Senate shall ask that a formal vote be taken thereon, in which case it shall be submitted to the Senate for decision after one contrary view is expressed; x x x"**

Chief Justice Davide, then presiding the impeachment proceedings, should have ruled Sen. Tatad and his preemptive motion out of order when the latter directly moved that the ***indisputably procedural issue*** to open the second envelop should be submitted to the Senate for a formal vote. **Tatad's preemption of the prior initiative for Davide to rule first on purely procedural issues violated the Rules. Davide should have ruled first that the envelop should be opened.** Thence, the proceedings would have continued smoothly/peacefully and terminated without any tumultuous public rancor. **Davide's gross neglect and failure to do so triggered EDSA People Power II. Hence, *Davide himself DIVIDED OUR PEOPLE and PRINCIPALLY CAUSED THE UNCONSTITUTIONAL change of the government.***

Material points and issues

A) The sovereign will of 80 million citizens of the Republic is expressed by our 35 million voters in accordance with the electoral processes ordained by the fundamental law. The Constitution did not provide for presidential succession by modern "mob rule", like EDSA People Power II of just over 200,000 people or by the mere withdrawal of support of military generals to the incumbent President who is the Commander-in-Chief.

Neither did it give the Supreme Court the power to declare the position of the President vacant or the sitting President's inability to discharge the functions of his office. When the respondent Justices therefore resolved, although there was no justiciable case before the Supreme Court, that Macapagal-Arroyo be sworn into office, they exercised political, not judicial, power. Verily, the Macapagal-Arroyo's presidential succession and change of government grossly violated the Constitution beyond question.

B) It is also quite clear that all respondent Justices were ***principal parties in the open political conspiracy*** to carry out the change of government that was absolutely without any constitutional warrant. **There is here a glaring violation of the *time-honored "separation of powers" of the 3 branches of government* that is fundamental in any democratic system.**

"James Madison in THE FEDERALIST, No. 47, wrote: "No political truth is certainly of greater intrinsic value, or is stamped with the authority of more enlightened patrons of liberty, than that . . . accumulation of all powers, legislative, executive, and judiciary, in the same hands. . . may justly be pronounced the very definiton of tyranny." Building on the theoretical writings of Montesquieu and John Locke, and the practical experience of seventeenth-century England, the colonies and the Confederation (where powers were merged in the legislature), the framers undertook to separate the legislative, executive and judicial powers in the first three articles of the Constitution. *See* Sharp, *The Classical American Doctrine of "The Separation of Powers,"* 2 U. CHI. L. REV. 385 [1935]. But would this prevent tyranny? Left to itself, each branch might accumulate power with which to impose its will." *(Barron-Dienes, Constitutional Law: Principles and Policy, Chapter 4)*

C) Respondent Supreme Court Justices indulged in "mumbo jumbo" hermeneutics on the meaning of the simple word "resignation" which actually means the ***VOLUNTARY ACT* of resigning. And the resignation mutually agreed upon between Angara and De Villa et als simply means a "*WRITTEN* RESIGNATION" that was not signed. It may not be effected either by threats, duress, force or coercion**, otherwise, it is worthless and ineffective. This is the first time in our jurisprudence that it has been ruled that resignation may be effected by mental intent or by implication. *This defies all common sense and basic hermeneutics.*

Like a person who has the mental intent or desire to murder another man, he is not liable for merely intending and desiring to kill. He would be liable only if he actually perpetrated and consummated the act. Hence, even if Pres. Estrada intended to resign conformably with the negotiations then being conducted between the respective authorized parties, if in fact the resignation already drafted was not signed, then of course, there can be no resignation. Accordingly, the ruling of respondent Justices that Pres. Estrada has resigned defies all common sense. It was wittingly done to validate their impeachable action. They vainly tried to extricate themselves from the constitutional crisis they have created by indulging in a lot of convoluted logic and legal tommyrot.

D) The provision in Section 8, Article VII of the Constitution, on "permanent disability" clearly contemplates and covers physical or medical disability and not "disability" by reason of modern "lynching mob" or "withdrawal of support" of military generals which is done only by "banana republics".

E) Only Congress may resolve when "the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, the Congress shall decide the issue," and "by a two thirds vote of both Houses voting separately, that the President is *unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office*". (Art. VII, Section 11, pars. 3 and 4)

F) True that Pres. Macapagal-Arroyo already assumed and exercised the functions of her office, appointed her Cabinet officials, Ambassadors, and her administration was recognized by foreign governments, and ***descended from a truly great Filipino, Pres. Diosdado Macapagal.*** She may also be doing good as President. But these did not legalize what was indisputably violative of the Constitution when she was unconstitutionally sworn in as President by respondent Davide with the unconstitutional and unwarranted approval of the rest of the members of the Supreme Court. The unconstitutional change of government may now be de jure, but, this is not the crucial issue - it is the grave institutional damage to our democratic system of government.

G) We are now dangerously confronted with exceptionally arrogant judicial authoritarianism, rather frightening judicial despotism, as the Supreme Court unwarrantedly arrogated as it arrogated unto itself political power, unconstitutionally indulging and exercising political action to change our government. Constitutional "separation of powers" was grossly violated. **The Supreme Court has established the most dangerous judicial precedent by ruling in effect that modern "mob rule", euphemistically called "people power", is now a ground for a change of government. Indeed, respondent Justices have inflicted incalculable institutional damage to our democratic system of government. They are now the high priests of the resurrected modern "lynching mob".**

Crucial findings in Supreme Court Decision.

Before the Senate impeachment vote on January 16, 2001, Chief of Staff **Angelo Reyes, a man of principle and probity**, then confronted by the tense political situation, was concerned on the role of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

"x x x. According to Colonel Corpus, sometime in December, when the tide of public unrest against Estrada was rising, Reyes consulted Raul Pangalanan, dean of the University of the Philippines College of Law, for legal advice on the question of the constitutional role of the Armed Forces. Reyes, Corpus, and Pangalanan had crossed paths at Harvard University in 1989-90 when, the two officers were doing master of arts studies at the John F. Kennedy School of Government and Pangalanan was doing his Ph. D. at the Harvard Law School.

Pangalanan confirmed he had talks with both Corpus and Reyes after his return from Harvard. He said they consulted him over the issues of civilian supremacy over the military, over which they appeared to have "serious concerns". In an interview, *Pangalanan recalled that he expressed reservations that any means of removing Estrada other than resignation or impeachment would be "stretching the text of the Constitution."* As dean of the UP College of Law, *Pangalanan had taken the position that the "proper procedure" was impeachment or resignation, and any other procedure was a "constitutional shortcut"*. x x x.

"What impressed Pangalanan was the concern of Reyes and Corpus for constitutional probity "beyond what I expected from Filipino generals"." *(Amando Doronila, The Fall of Joseph Estrada, The Inside Story, p. 197)*

The Decision of the Supreme Court under challenge shows:

"The **first negotiation** (Secretary Edgardo Angara, Senior Deputy Executive Secretary Ramon Bagatsing, Political Adviser Angelito Banayo, Asst. Secretary Boying Remulla, and Atty. Macel Fernandez, head of the Presidential Management Staff, negotiated for the petitioner. Respondent Arroyo was represented by now Executive Secretary Renato De Villa, now Secretary of Finance Alberto Romulo) for a peaceful and orderly transfer of power immediately at 12:20 a.m. January 20, (2001), that fateful Saturday. The **negotiation was limited** to three (3) points: (1) the transition period of five days after the petitioner's resignation; x x x." (pp. 29, Decision)

x x x x x x x x x

The **second round of negotiation** resume at 7:30 a.m. According to the Angara Diary, the following happened:

"Opposition deal (Macapagal-Arroyo's)

"7:30 a.m. – x x x "Rene pulls out a document titled "Negotiating Points." It reads:

"1. ***The President SHALL SIGN a resignation document within the day, 20 January 2001, THAT WILL BE EFFECTIVE on Wednesday, 24 January 2001, on which day the Vice President will assume the Presidency of the Republic of the Philippines.***"

x x x x x x x x x

"Our deal (Estrada's)

x x x x x x x x x

"1. ***A transition will occur and take place on Wednesday, 24 January 2001, at which time President Joseph Ejercito Estrada will turn over the presidency to Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.***" (p. 31, Decision)

x x x x x x x x x

"The second round of negotiation cements the reading that the petitioner has resigned. It will be noted that during this second round of negotiation, the resignation of the petitioner was again treated as a given fact. x x x." (pp 32, Decision)

"x x x. The Angara Diary narrates the fateful events, viz: [90]

"11:00 a.m. – **Between General Reyes and myself, there is a firm agreement on the five points to effect a peaceful transition.** I can hear the general clearing all these points with a group he is with. I hear voices in the background.

"Agreement"

"The agreement starts: 1. The President shall resign today 20 January 2001, which resignation shall be effective on 24 January 2001, on which day the Vice President will assume the presidency of the Republic of the Philippines." (p. 33, Decision)

x x x x x x x x x

"11:20 a.m. – I am all set to fax General Reyes and Nene Pimentel our agreement, signed by our side and awaiting the signature of the United Opposition.

"And then it happens. *GENERAL REYES CALL ME TO SAY THAT THE SUPREME COURT HAS DECIDED THAT GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO IS PRESIDENT AND WILL BE SWORN IN AT 12 NOON.*

'Bakit hindi naman kayo nakahintay? Paano na ang agreement (Why couldn't you wait? What about the agreement?)' I asked.

Reyes answered: 'Wala na, sir (It's over, sir).'

"I asked him: 'Di yung transition period, moot and academic na?'

"And General Reyes answers: 'Oo nga, i-delete na natin, sir (Yes, we're deleting that part).'

x x x x x x x x x

"**But I immediately instruct Macel** ***to delete the first provision on resignation*** since this matter is already moot and academic. Within moments, **Macel erases the first provision** and faxes the documents, which have been signed by myself, Dondon and Macel to Nene Pimentel and General Reyes.

x x x x x x x x x

"I then advise the President that **THE SUPREME COURT HAS RULED that Chief Justice Davide will administer the oath to Gloria at 12 noon.**" (p. 14)

(Joseph E. Estrada vs. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo,
G.R. No. 146738, March 2, 2001, Decision, 34)

VP Macapagal-Arroyo, through her negotiating team headed by De Villa, proposed and agreed to the following:

"1. ***The President SHALL SIGN a resignation document within the day, 20 January 2001, THAT WILL BE EFFECTIVE on Wednesday, 24 January 2001, on which day the Vice President will assume the Presidency of the Republic of the Philippines.***" (p. 31, Decision)

Based upon the foregoing factual findings of the Supreme Court, **respondent Justices finally ruled and decided**:

"Using this totality test, *WE HOLD THAT PETITIONER (ESTRADA) RESIGNED AS PRESIDENT.*" (p. 27, supra)

Ruling further: **"In sum, we hold that the resignation of the petitioner cannot be doubted."** (p 35, supra)

With all due respect, it should be underscored that ***this Decision of respondent Justices is not supported by their own findings*** cited above.

It is crystal clear that ***"The President SHALL SIGN a resignation document within the day, 20 January 2001*** x x x" which clearly means, and even elementary students know it is in the "future tense," ***that Estrada will yet sign his resignation in accordance with the terms of the mutual agreement*** between the respective authorized representatives of Pres. Estrada and VP Macapagal-Arroyo. In fact, actually ***Estrada has not yet resigned and the projected signing of the resignation on January 20, 2001 was pre-empted and aborted by outrageous double-cross*** when Vice-President Macapagal-Arroyo urgently requested by letter to the Supreme Court Chief Justice Davide to be sworn as President, thus:

"20 January 2001

THE HONORABLE SUPREME COURT
Supreme Court Building
Padre Faura St., Ermita, Manila

Attention: **Honorable Hilario G. Davide, Jr.**
Chief Justice

Your Honor:

The undersigned respectfully informs the Honorable Court ***that Joseph Ejercito Estrada is permanently incapable of performing the duties of his office resulting in his permanent disability to govern and serve his unexpired term.*** Almost all of his Cabinet members have resigned and the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police have withdrawn their support for Joseph Ejercito Estrada. Civil society has likewise refused to recognize him as President.

In view of this, I am assuming the position of President of the Republic of the Philippines. Accordingly, I would like to take my oath as President of the Republic of the Philippines as before the Honorable Chief Justice Hilario G. Davide, Jr., today, 20 January 2001, at 12:00 noon, at the EDSA Shrine, Quezon City, Metro Manila.

May I have the honor to invite all the members of the Honorable Court to attend the oath taking.

Very truly yours,

(SGD) GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO"

Vice-President Macapagal Arroyo had absolutely no power under the Constitution to declare and decide that Estrada "is permanently incapable of performing the duties of his office resulting in his permanent disability to govern and serve his unexpired term."

And this letter did not present either a "justiciable case" for judicial resolution. The Supreme Court may only decide a "flesh and blood" controversy. But respondent Justices, violating all governing rules, unwarrantedly categorized it as "justiciable".

> **"Unlike the political departments, courts are passive instruments that can act only when their jurisdiction is invoked. It has already been remarked that, even then, the question raised will not be entertained by them if it is political in nature."** ***(Isagani A. Cruz, Jr., Phil. Political Law, 1989 Ed., p. 225)***

Again, respondent Justices grossly abused their judicial function and oath of office.

The Supreme Court DECISION shows:

"A.M. No. 01-1-05-SC – In re: Request of Vice-President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to take her Oath of Office as President of the Philippines before the Chief Justice – Acting on the urgent request of Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to be sworn in as President of the Republic of the Philippines, addressed to the Chief Justice and confirmed letter to the Court, dated January 20, 2001, x x x." (Joseph E. Estrada vs. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, G.R. No. 146738, March 2, 2001)

Forthwith, respondent ***Chief Justice Davide UNCONSTITUTIONALLY AND ILLEGALLY INSTALLED Vice-President Macapagal-Arroyo as President of the Philippines*** at high noon on January 20, 2001 supported by all respondent Justices who trooped to EDSA.

Instead of resigning or signing his letter of resignation, on the same date, January 20, 2001, Pres. Estrada sent his "letter dated January 20, 2001 x x x to Senate President Pimentel and speaker Fuentebella, x x x viz:

"Sir:

"By virtue of the provisions of Section 11, Article VII of the Constitution, *I am hereby transmitting this declaration that I am unable to exercise the powers and duties of my office. By operation of law and the Constitution, the Vice President shall be the Acting President.*

(Sgd.) Joseph Ejercito Estrada"
(G.R. No. 146738, p. 36, Decision)

which has constitutional sanction as provided by Sec. 11, Art. VII, Constitution.

In an En Banc Resolution on Jan. 22, 2001, **all respondent Supreme Court Justices unanimously "resolved to CONFIRM the authority given by the twelve members of the Court then present (while 2 others out of town faxed their approval) to the Chief Justice on January 20, 2001 to administer the oath of office to VP Macapagal-Arroyo as President of the Philippines**, at noon on January 20, 2001". Hence, **all respondents** committed culpable violation of the Constitution when, accordingly, **Chief Justice Davide unconstitutionally installed VP Macapagal-Arroyo "as President"**, notwithstanding Estrada's official letter-advice to Congress cited above that shows beyond question that ***VP Macapagal-Arroyo may be sworn constitutionally only as "Acting President"***.

To justify the unconstitutional change of government brought about by respondent Justices, their Decision cited the House of Representative Resolution No. 176[97] passed on **January 24, 2001**, viz:

"RESOLUTION *EXPRESSING THE SUPPORT OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO THE ASSUMPTION INTO OFFICE BY VICE PRESIDENT GLORIA MACAPGAL-ARROYO AS PRESIDENT* OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES, x x x" (G.R. No. 146738, p 43, Decision)

Too late ! It is not in accordance with Section 11, Art. VII, Constitution. The change of government was still unconstitutional.

No factual basis for deciding Estrada to have resigned.

1. While conceding that some 10 million Filipinos voted for Estrada as President, respondent Supreme Court Justices, without actually taking a nose count of the people in EDSA on 20 January 2001, extravagantly indulged in hyperbolic expressions of "paroxysms of outrage" with "people crying for redress of their grievances" and that "[t]he tide had become a tsunami" demanding Estrada's resignation as President. To further buttress its hypothesized or conjured popular or democratic support for its ruling that Estrada had resigned to give way to Arroyo, respondents cited surveys conducted by Pulse Asia and ABS-CBS SWS. Is the Supreme Court now a political weather bureau?

The Supreme Court Decision under challenge is replete with childish metaphors and twisted logic, extravagantly belabored with impertinent discourse and hermeneutical gobbledygook. The Supreme Court is a shame to our history.

2. Respondents adverted to the fact that the military commanders had supposedly withdrawn their support for Estrada, but is it for the military commanders to decide for themselves which President they would obey, Estrada or Macapagal-Arroyo? On what ground may the military commanders base their decision to withdraw, or shift their support?

3. What if, as it turned out later, a substantial enough group of people in EDSA People Power III of over 300,000 people did not see Estrada as having resigned permanently or temporarily? Is the issue to be decided according to the relative sizes of the respective mobs?

4. EDSA People Power III truly with more people failed, but what if it succeeded as it almost did?

5. Are respondent Justices now the Judge of what is the national consensus? Who made them so? Obviously, none other than respondent Supreme Court Justices themselves. But is this the role of the Justices?

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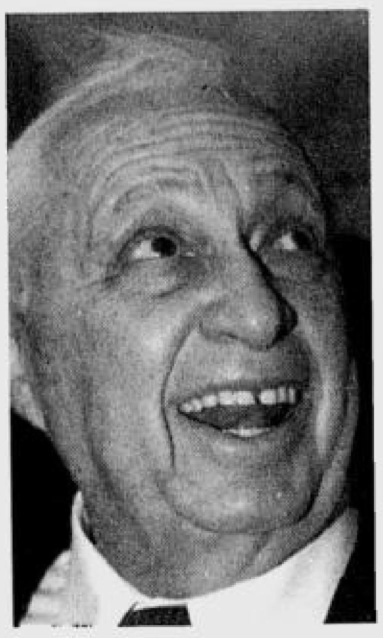
The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**



SHARON

New violence jolts US peace bid

JERUSALEM—Palestinian shooting and suicide bombing attacks and a move by Israeli tanks back into the West Bank broke a two-day lull in Middle East violence Sunday and jolted a US bid to negotiate a ceasefire.

Despite the fresh violence, however, US envoy Anthony Zinni appeared to have chipped away at the mutual mistrust by arranging for security officials from both sides to meet for late-night talks.

Three Palestinians and one Israeli woman were killed in the latest spurt of bloodshed, which erupted as Zinni was going into talks with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat on the fourth day of his attempt to end nearly 18 months of violence.

A Palestinian man also died Sunday in a blast outside Jerusalem which Israeli police labeled "a work accident," their term for a Palestinian killed while handling explosives for a bomb attack.

The dust had barely settled from the shooting spree in the town of Kfar Saba northeast of Tel Aviv when an adviser to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon said it showed Arafat's "basic bad faith."

Zalman Shoval said Israel had gone "a long way in the direction of what the United States would have wanted us to do" in setting the stage for a ceasefire but Shoval insisted Arafat was still wedded to terrorism.

"He may once again say he condemns it, but we know he stands behind it," Shoval said. "The Israel government cannot let things like this pass without taking counter-measures."

An 18-year-old woman was killed and 15 other people wounded, two of them seriously, when a Palestinian gunman sprayed Kfar Saba with automatic fire before he was shot dead by police, officials said.

An armed offshoot of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement, the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, claimed responsibility for the shooting spree.

However Fatah issued its own statement saying the gunman, Amar Shakshir, 25, from the West Bank town of Nablus, belonged to its organization but acted alone.

Minutes after the first attack, a Palestinian kamikaze blew himself up near a Jewish neighborhood in annexed east Jerusalem.

Some passengers in a nearby bus were slightly injured by shrapnel from the blast, which was claimed by the radical Islamic Jihad group.

The attacks were the first confirmed Palestinian strikes on Israeli soil since 14 Israelis were killed in Jerusalem and the northern town of Netanya eight days ago. ***AFP***

2 killed, mosques torched in India riots

NEW DELHI—Two people died in riots Sunday despite efforts by Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee to cool tempers amid opposition pressure over a radical Hindu drive to build a temple on the ruins of a razed mosque.

The government's efforts to put an end to violence, especially in the western state of Gujarat, the scene of last month's communal riots that claimed 700 lives, appeared to be failing as Hindus and Muslims clashed in at least two riot-torn cities.

A mob of 500 rioters attacked a Hindu residential city district and burned a printer's shop and a house, police said, adding that six people were injured in the attack.

In nearby Baroda, two people were stabbed to death in street fighting, forcing police to open fire to break up stone-throwing mobs, officials said.

In Haryana state, Hindu rioters also torched two mosques and nearby shops amid rumors that Muslims had driven a cow into the complex for slaughter. The police dispersed the attackers by firing in the air.

At least two people, believed to be Muslims, were critically injured in the mob violence, the Press Trust of India said. Cows are revered by Hindus and consumption of its beef is banned by law.

In Gujarat Saturday night, two people were injured when police fired at Hindu and Muslim rioters in the troubled city of Ahmedabad.

"It was again a free-for-all on Sunday but we have intensified patrolling," a police spokesperson said.

Police had rounded up thousands of people across India ahead of the contentious Hindu prayer ritual Friday in Ayodhya to prevent fresh sectarian riots after the Hindu-Muslim clashes that began in Gujarat on Feb. 27. ***AFP***

Bush vows to help hunt Pakistan church attackers

ISLAMABAD/WASHINGTON—US President George W. Bush vowed to help find the people behind a grenade attack on a Pakistan church that killed five people, including a US diplomat's wife and daughter, and wounded more than 40.

There was no claim of responsibility for Sunday's attack in the capital, Islamabad, but suspicion fell on hardline Islamic groups opposed to Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf's support for the US-led war on terror after the Sept. 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

"I am outraged by the terrorist attack that took place today in Islamabad, Pakistan, against innocent civilians. I strongly condemn them as acts of murder that cannot be tolerated by any person of conscience nor justified by any cause," Bush said in a statement released by the White House on Sunday.

"We will work closely with the government of Pakistan to ensure those responsible for this terrorist attack face justice."

The killings follow the kidnapping and execution of another US citizen in Pakistan, Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl, who was abducted on Jan. 23.

Forty-two people from various nations were wounded in the church attack and the death toll could rise. Officials said six or seven people suffered serious injuries.

"I saw a fellow throwing some grenades," said an elderly German woman wearing a white scarf flecked with blood who gave her name as Jutta. "I got down. Praise God I was spared but others were seriously injured. It was havoc." ***Reuters***

Sentence ends Australia's worst modern mass murder

LONG

BRISBANE—An itinerant fruitpicker who started a fire which killed 15 people in a popular backpackers' hostel was jailed for life on Monday, bringing a close to one of Australia's worst modern mass murders.

Brisbane Supreme Court Judge Peter Dutney handed Robert Long the mandatory life sentence after a jury convicted the homeless 38-year-old on Friday of two counts of murder.

Long was also jailed for 15 years on a single arson charge to be served concurrently with the murder sentence. He could be eligible for parole in 20 years.

"I'm happy to concede you had no intent to kill but death was such an inevitability in the circumstances that to light those fires displays callousness and cruelty that is hard to imagine," the judge told the court.

The case drew international attention after six Britons, an Irish national, two Dutch backpackers, a South Korean and a Japanese traveler were killed with four Australians.

The 12-member jury deliberated for two days before convicting Long of arson and the murder of Australian twins Kelly and Stacey Slarke in the horrifying midnight fire on June 23, 2000. ***Reuters***

> "The mere demography of the judiciary suggests that judges, especially federal judges, are far from a representative cross section of American society. They are overwhelmingly Anglo, male, well educated, and upper or upper middle class. They are also members of the legal profession – an affiliation that by definition sets them apart from other members of society. [The] net effect of [judicial review] is to systematically exclude citizens and their representatives from the most fundamental decisions of the polity. This is completely at odds with the classical conception of citizenship held by political theorists such as Aristotle, J.S., Mill, Rousseau, and Jefferson, for whom the very concept of citizenship involved participation in those decisions." **(Brest, Who Decides?, 58 S. Cal. L. Rev. 661, 664, 670 [1985])**

Respondents had no power to declare the Office of the President vacant or that its incumbent has resigned.

6. To repeat, the Supreme Court has no power under the Constitution to declare the Office of the President of the Philippines vacant or that its incumbent has resigned. Otherwise, it would be within the power of the Supreme Court, a politically non-responsible body, and "a counter-majoritarian force in our system" (Alexander Bickel, The Least Dangerous Branch, p. 16), to overrule the choice of 10 million Filipinos, the overwhelming majority of the electorate. Therefore, the respondent Justices had nullified Estrada's popular mandate with their distorted and convoluted view of their power of judicial review. This is judicial activism and arrogance in its most catastrophic extreme.

7. We have a procedure, and that is impeachment, for removing a sitting President. This procedure was initiated and partially activated in the case of Estrada but it was aborted. But surely, there is no provision in the Constitution which empowers the Supreme Court to continue the aborted impeachment and render judgment as if the proceedings had run its full course to judgment.

8. Respondents made much capital of the freedom of assembly, the freedom to petition the government for redress of grievances and the freedom of speech. But the grant of these freedoms cannot be interpreted as empowering the Supreme Court to decide, on the basis of its collective perception of the size of the assembly or the loudness of the petition, that a President had abandoned his office or resigned therefrom. But this is precisely what respondents had done in their Decision to declare Estrada as having resigned and Arroyo as having succeeded to the presidency in his place.

9. If there is any department in our Government which has the power to declare the President as disabled from discharging his powers and duties, it is Congress and not the Supreme Court. It was folly and *post hoc* rationalization to assert that the Congressional Resolution passed on January 24, 2001 ***expressing support*** **to Arroyo's assumption of office** and her nomination of Guingona as Vice-President was an effective declaration by Congress that the President was disabled and there was a vacancy. The Supreme Court put words in the mouth of Congress in a **veiled effort to validate the action of Chief Justice Davide and Justice Panganiban at the EDSA Shrine** where they set the climate for such *post hoc* manifestation **by swearing in Arroyo as President**. This is **another culpable violation of the Constitution amounting to an *ex parte* adjudication by the Chief Justice that Estrada is no longer the President and that Arroyo is the new President. *Davide had arrogated to himself the power to unseat a President and to install another in his place.***

10. What respondents did is to convert our Constitutional system with its electoral and impeachment mechanisms into one of "mob rule," a system whereby the Supreme Court Justices can substitute their judgment for the purely political judgment of the electorate.

11. The bad precedent set by respondent Supreme Court Justices is dangerous and destructive. Henceforth, no President of this country can rest assured or be at ease that the Supreme Court may not declare his office vacant or that he abandoned it. If this is a legal and not a political question, then there are no political questions but only legal questions and everything is resolvable by the Supreme Court.

12. If the Supreme Court does indeed have the power to declare a President to have resigned or unable to discharge his duties, as the respondents had done in the Estrada-Arroyo case, what would be the standards and parameters of such power? What would be the effect of such a declaration on our political, social and economic conditions? What would be the quantum of evidence required to justify a judicial judgment on the matter?

13. The power to impeach the President is allocated by our Constitution to the House of Representatives and the trial of the impeachment charges to the Senate. But respondents had arrogated both powers unto themselves. Can any violation of the Constitution be more culpable?

14. The judicial power under the Constitution does not grant jurisdiction to our courts to decide all kinds of questions. Among these questions which are definitely beyond the pale of judicial review is the question whether a President has resigned or abandoned his office and whether another had validly succeeded thereto. No matter how cleverly the issue may be disguised as a legal issue, such a question is truly political which the courts including the Supreme Court cannot adjudicate.

15. What respondents had done here is "constitutional politics", the Justices manipulating the Constitution to suit their own narrow interests or perception of what the people want. *(See Ackerman, Constitutional Politics/ Constitutional Law, 99 Yale L.J. 453 [1989])* Under this extravagant view, the Justices would be the sole power to decide when the Constitution may be binding or not.

16. The Constitution was adopted and promulgated by "We, the sovereign people." The respondents here do not constitute "We." But they thought they do.

17. Ironically, respondents had, by their Decision in the Estrada-Arroyo case, planted the seeds of their own self-destruction. Have they not therefore held themselves out as omnipotent, with the capacity to decide on every question, and to lord it over all the other departments of the Government? Have they not laid the ground for judicial despotism, even if this may be linked up with the military and some mob support? What relief or protection do the people or ordinary citizen have against such awesome power? Really, it is not enough that Supreme Court Justices are educated and bright. They should be of spotless integrity, spiritually perceptive with mellowed wisdom. And it is about time that whoever would be a Justice of the Supreme Court, he should be reminded that he is merely a mortal, with feet of clay, and not little God on Mount Olympus, and he should behave accordingly.

18. Is there no limit to judicial power?

Impeachment of respondent Justices is the last recourse and the ultimate hope for retrieving our Constitutional system of installing and removing the President.

19. At the end of the day, impeachment, which is established by the Constitution itself, is the last remaining device of regaining political control over the Supreme Court which has exceeded all limits, constitutional, self-imposed and otherwise. And now that partisan rancor has subsided, it is auspicious to consider and resolve dispassionately this grave institutional damage to our democratic system.

20. *CONSIDERING* the foregoing, ***all respondent Supreme Court Justices should be impeached. And conformably therefore to Section 2 of Article XI of the Constitution, we pray that after due hearing on this exceptionally important Impeachment of the fifteen (15) Supreme Court's Justices involving the very constitutional foundation of our Republic, you file the appropriate Articles of Impeachment against these respondent Justices with the Senate.***

21. Incidentally, this is the first time we have come across an EPILOGUE by respondent ponente Justice Puno. It is out of place in any Decision of the Supreme Court. Perhaps, it is more appropriate in a Petition for Impeachment of respondent Supreme Court Justices. Hence, the following -

EPILOGUE

> **"It is a mistake to suppose that the Supreme Court is either honored or helped by being spoken of as beyond criticism. On the contrary, the life and character of its justices should be the object of constant watchfulness by all, and its judgments subject to the freest criticism . . . . . like their authors, devoid of good taste but better all sorts of criticism than no criticism at all. The moving waters are full of life and health, only in the still waters is stagnation and death."** — ***David Brewer***

We refer to the column "Beyond Edsa and People Power" by the profoundly perceptive and brillant journalist **Amando Doronila:**

> ***"EDSA I and II damaged institutions that lend to political stability in a democracy. x x x***
>
> ***"These institutions have been undermined and in many cases disregarded by political leaders themselves or by populist movements, now called people power, that worship turbulence as the weapon for leadership change." (Philippine Daily Inquirer, February 22, 2002, p. A9)***

Centuries ago, **Magna Carta of 1215 A.D.** proclaimed the **guarantee of these inalienable rights of all men:**

> ***"No freeman shall be taken or imprisoned, or disseised, or outlawed, or banished, or in any way destroyed, nor will we pass upon him, nor will we send upon him, unless by the lawful judgment of his peers, or by the law of the land."***

May we advert to the following revised philosophical lines which counsel delivered in 1970 during the inauguration of the Anti-Graft League Chapter in Bacolod, Negros Occidental:

Let us not despair with more government abuses
and corruption of our officialdom;

The more, the better, for then truly greater
vigilance will rise for our deliverance;

When the time is ripe get over with the worst crimes
of our corrupt officials and greedy rich;

For afterwards comes hope and salvation for our
long suffering unhappy people;

And our continuing racial karma will soon pass away,
darkness will unfold the breaking of beautiful dawn !

Do we have to undergo the supreme test of the bloody American Civil War, French and other bloody revolutions to temper in the fiery crucible our democratic maturity and for the moral deliverance of our people from so much shame and crime?

Where are those brave hearts among brother Filipinos, the courageous citizens of the nation, who will not just shed a tear, but are truly prepared to lay down their life, fortune and honor for the salvation of our country and people?

And now ; close this most unpleasant task –

"With malice towards none"
"With charity to all" !!!

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Quezon City, Philippines, February 25, 2002.

ANTI-GRAFT LEAGUE OF THE PHILIPPINES, INC.
(Complainant)
- and -
PUBLIC INTEREST CENTER, INC.
(Complainant)

By:

CRISPIN T. REYES
Chairman-General Counsel
Suite 703, Fil Garcia Tower
Kalayaan Avenue, Quezon City
Tel. No. 924-6430 Fax 926-8558

VERIFICATION

I, CRISPIN T. REYES, of legal age, Filipino, and with offices at Suite 703, Fil Garcia Tower, Kalayaan Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City, do hereby depose and state that I am the Chairman of the Anti-Graft League of the Philippines, Inc. and Public Interest Center, Inc. who caused the preparation of this Complaint for Impeachment of the 15 respondent Supreme Court Justices; and I have read the same and that the allegations therein are correct to the best of my personal knowledge.

CRISPIN T. REYES
Affiant

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this 13th day of March 2002, affiant exhibiting to me his Community Tax Certificate No. 05932968 issued on January 6, 2001 at Quezon City.

Doc. No. 691 ;
Page No. 139 ;
Book No. 5-A ;
Series of 2002

ATTY. AMADO E. VILLAFUERTE
NOTARY PUBLIC
COMM. UNTIL DEC. 31, 2002
PTR OR NO. A2859754/DTO1-2-2002, Q.C.

JUSTICES IMPEACHMENT
CTR/bobby*

*- ***In 1938, when counsel was a UP Law student, he organized "Preserve the Constitution Youth League" that campaigned against Pres. Quezon's fanciful amendment of the 1935 Constitution. Again, on May 13, 1988, he impeached 14 Justices of the Supreme Court (impeachment complaint attached hereto) for culpable violation of the 1987 Constitution for amending Secs. 7, 12, Art. XI, thereby usurping the exclusive power of the people to amend the Constitution via its absolutely unwarranted Decision in "Enrique Zaldivar vs. Hon. Raul Gonzales, G.R. No. L. 80578; and Enrique Zaldivar vs. Tanodbayan, G.R. No. L. 796-707". A WW II veteran, for crusading against corruption (see attachment), counsel was among the first to be arrested upon declaration of Marcos Martial Law and imprisoned for 2 years.***

*- now retired – not subject to impeachment

*- ***Born to adversity, self-supporting UP student admitted to the Bar in 1940 (87% - Mercantile Law - 100%), selflessly fought (WW II) for country and people declining backpay or compensation for human rights violation for his 2-year martial law imprisonment, upholding important public interest during peace time, serving the unhappy poor for whom corrupt government officials and the greedy rich would not shed a tear, a lawyer of 62 unhappy years because of sickening corruption caused by utter breakdown of Filipino morality, now he will stop "tilting with the windmills" of Cervantes, and will just start fading with the heavenly splendor of the beautiful sunset- this is my valedictory !***

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A14 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER TUESDAY, MARCH 19, 2002

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Class suit planned over Drilon milk

By Jun Malig
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—The offices of the provincial administrator and provincial attorney here and the families of schoolchildren believed poisoned by chocolate milk products in Minalin town last week are set to file a class suit against Alaska Milk Corp. (AMC).

The Minalin municipal government is also planning to file separate legal charges against AMC for the poisoning of pupils at the Sto. Domingo, San Isidro, Sta. Rita and Lourdes elementary schools in the town.

AMC won the bidding to supply milk under the Department of Education's school feeding program in November 2001. The program was funded by Senate President Franklin Drilon.

Records from the Provincial Disaster Coordinating Council showed that about 1,100 schoolchildren suffered food poisoning in Minalin, but only 240 were taken to the Jose B. Lingad Memorial Regional Hospital here and three other government hospitals in the province.

The children showed signs of food poisoning, like abdominal pains, vomiting and nausea, after drinking the Alaska chocolate milk that were donated by Drilon and distributed by the DepEd under its school feeding program.

Lawyer Benalfre Galang, provincial administrator, told the INQUIRER on Thursday that the complainants would seek moral and exemplary damages from AMC "because the children, as well as their families, suffered physical and emotional injuries."

Minalin Mayor Edgar Flores said the local government was waiting for the final results of the Bureau of Food and Drugs' laboratory testing on the chocolate milk drink before they would file a complaint.

"The findings of the Bureau of Food and Drugs will be the basis of our legal complaints against Alaska," he said.

Santiago Polido, AMC corporate affairs director, said the planned class suit against the firm has no basis as the BFAD has yet to release its laboratory findings on the sample milk products.

"It's premature. There is no basis (for the planned suit)," Polido told the INQUIRER by telephone yesterday.

SOME of the victims of Drilon's donated milk. FILE PHOTO/VAL HANDUMON

He said their investigation also showed that there was nothing wrong with the chocolate milk products served to the children.

"There's nothing that would indicate something wrong with the product . . . we stand by the integrity of our product," he said.

In a statement issued last week, AMC said the chocolate milk products delivered to DepEd were "in order and (of) good quality."

The company said there was nothing wrong with the products delivered to DepEd "from production to storage to handling." It said the products were delivered to the department on Feb. 2.

The planned legal actions stemmed from the parents' complaint that the chocolate milk products' expiration date was tampered with.

The "August 2001" expiry date markings on the shipping cartons were allegedly replaced and stamped with "October 2002."

But Polido said there was "no expired product to speak of" as the expiry date printed on the individual chocolate milk tetra packs were not tampered with and showed that the milk would expire in October this year.

DepEd officials also maintained that the chocolate milk products served to the children were not spoiled and that their expiry dates were not tampered with.

School teachers in Minalin said the chocolate milk products were delivered to them on March 7, or four days before the poisoning took place.

Drilon, the donor of the milk products, has apologized to the families of the victims. He has said he only provides funding for the school feeding program and that it is the DepEd that implements it.

Earlier, Gov. Manuel Lapid ordered the suspension of the distribution of chocolate milk to various elementary schools in the province.

The DepEd also suspended the distribution of milk products nationwide pending the results of the investigation of the poisoning cases in Minalin.

Landowner resistance stalling CARP in Eastern Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—An official of the Department of Agrarian Reform in Eastern Visayas has admitted that the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program has yet to be fully implemented in the region because big landowners refuse to submit their vast tracts of land to the program.

Marlu Merin, DAR-8 operations chief, said many of the landowners who own "*haciendas*" remain hostile when it comes to subjecting their property under the CARP.

He, however, did not identify the landowners who refuse to cooperate with the program.

"While the farmer-beneficiaries were already given their (Certificate of Land Ownership Awards), many of them have yet to be in actual possession of the land," Merin told the INQUIRER.

As of December last year, DAR-8 records showed 18,290 hectares of land were identified as "problematic," which means that the land could not be distributed due to either legal or technical questions.

In Leyte, which has been identified by DAR officials as the most "problematic area" in Eastern Visayas, the DAR has yet to resolve issues surrounding the 8,455 hectares placed under the CARP.

Last year, of the 912 farmers in Leyte who were issued Cloas, only 266 were in actual possession of their farmland.

The landowners in Ormoc City and in the nearby town of Merida were the most hostile to the CARP, Merin said.

Last year, the DAR-8 distributed 505 Cloas in Ormoc but only 127 of those who received the certificates were in actual possession of the land. In Merida, only 82 of the 147 farmers got control over the land awarded to them by the DAR.

The same records showed that the DAR-8 office had identified 7,792 farmers as agrarian reform beneficiaries covering a total of 13,277 hectares of land.

Aside from Ormoc and Merida, Merin named the towns of Alangalang, Kananga, Babatngon, Bato, Capoocan and Palompon as "problematic areas."

But Merin said they were trying their best to encourage landowners to submit their property under the land reform program.

"We have formed specialized groups that are now looking for solutions to these problems," he said.

The DAR considers Southern Leyte the least problematic area, with only 137 hectares of land being contested by landowners. ***Joey A. Gabieta, PDI Visayas Bureau***

FEU Gives Students Last Chance to Take Exams

Far Eastern University does not dictate to the students the program of studiẽs that they must take. It does tell them the requirements to qualify for, and to complete, a specific program.

Some of these requirements, mainly relating to minimum standards, are mandated by the government. Others are imposed by the University, because it believes that students should not settle only for minimum standards.

The first year students admitted to FEU in 1997 were told that the B.S. Accountancy course had become, like Engineering and Architecture, a five-year program. But no one compelled them to take up Accountancy. The students from the Class of 1997 who chose to enroll in Accountancy and who have now filed a case against FEU are fifth-year students. They now claim that the University did not have the authority to impose a five-year curriculum on them, that they should no longer be required to take the comprehensive examinations for their program, and that they should all be given their B.S.A. degrees.

At a meeting with B.S.A. students and their parents on 21 February, the University reaffirmed three points:

1. The Institute of Accounts, Business and Finance, with a Level II accreditation, had the prerogative to establish a 5-year Accountancy program.
2. The comprehensive examinations, as in other Institutes, were part of the academic requirements of the program.
3. The University granted diplomas on the basis of individual performance and did not engage in the practice of mass promotions.

On 5 March, the Manila Regional Trial Court dismissed the petition of the students to prevent FEU from conducting the comprehensive examinations for the Accountancy program. The majority of the students, however, chose not to take the examinations.

Confident in the merits of its case, the University can choose to let the law take its course. The court decision, however, will necessarily take time and inevitably prejudice those who had hoped to receive their diplomas this year. It is possible that many students, not having all the facts of the case, may have misread the situation. The University is, therefore, providing a **final** opportunity for them to pass the comprehensive examination and qualify for graduation this April.

The examinations will take place on the following dates:

ACT 24	March 21	1:30-3:45 PM	ARH Building
TAX 10	March 21	4:30-5:45 PM	ARH Building
ACT 25	March 22	1:30-3:45 PM	ARH Building
ACT 26	March 23	1:30-3:45 PM	ARH Building
LAW 10	March 23	4:30-5:45 PM	ARH Building

Reyes, war veterans praise each other at Iloilo City rites

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—It appeared to be a case of mutual admiration between Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes and World War II veterans who attended yesterday's commemoration of the 57th Victory Day in Panay, Romblon and Guimaras.

Reyes, who was guest of honor in the anniversary rites of the Sixth Military District World War II Veterans Association, paid tribute to the heroism and gallantry of the local freedom fighters against Japanese troops.

In return, the veterans presented Reyes a plaque of appreciation for his role in People Power II in January 2000.

Speaking at the memorial rites at Balantang Memorial Cemetery National Shrine, Reyes said the observance was a reminder of how ordinary people lived to do extraordinary things.

"The veterans belong to the nation's greatest generation because they left their homes, farms, dreams and ambitions to defend their country," he said.

Reyes also announced a P500 increase in veterans' pension from P4,500 to P5,000 this year and the release of unpaid P10,000 burial benefits for each veteran.

The celebration was attended by more than 1,000 veterans from all over Panay. It was supposed to be a sunrise service at 7 a.m. but Reyes' late arrival delayed the program by almost two hours.

In presenting a plaque of appreciation to Reyes, lawyer Carlos Capaque, president of the veterans association, cited the defense chief's role in the "peaceful transition of the national leadership" from Joseph Estrada to Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

He said Reyes's move restored "honor, trust and decency in government."

March 18 was initially called the Liberation Day to commemorate the arrival of American troops in the coastal village of Parara, Tigbuan town, 22 kilometers south of here. But the veterans insisted on claiming the credit for liberating Panay, Romblon and Guimaras from Japanese forces, thus it is officially referred to as "Victory (Liberation Day)."

This year's celebration carried the theme "World War II Veterans Support Campaign Against Local and International Terrorism." But many veterans were more bothered by the oppressive heat and noonday sun than making a connection between World War II and international terrorism.

ROUNDUP

Suspected rebel captured

DIGOS CITY—A suspected member of the Moro National Liberation Front was captured on Sunday night after his group fought with police authorities in Sambas Subdivision, Sitio Power, Tres de Mayo here. Police identified the suspect as Ronald Mamon, a resident of the subdivision. Supt. Samuel Navaja, Davao del Sur police director, said the encounter took place when policemen, acting on a complaint of alleged harassment, arrived in the village. The policemen saw three armed men who fired at them even before they could disembark from their vehicles, prompting them to fire their weapons as well. Mamon, armed with a .45 cal. pistol, was later captured while his companions managed to escape.

Anthony S. Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau

BIMP-Eaga celebration

DAVAO CITY—The weeklong celebration of the founding of the Brunei Darussalam-Indonesia-Malaysia-the Philippines-East Asean Growth Area (BIMP-Eaga) officially kicked off yesterday. The BIMP-Eaga initiative was conceived here in March 1994 to spur development in the lagging sub-regional economies of the member-countries. In coordination with the city government and other government offices, the Mindanao Economic Development Council, the Philippine coordinating office for BIMP-Eaga, will lead the celebration of the 8th anniversary of the BIMP-Eaga sub-regional cooperation.

Anthony S. Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Hearings on Internet use

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—The city council has started a series of public hearings on a proposed measure that bans students from entering Internet cafés during classes. Councilor Jose Mari Natividad, chair of the games and amusement committee, said the public consultations would address complaints from both parents and school authorities about students cutting classes to play computer games in Internet cafés. On Thursday, representatives of public and private secondary and elementary schools, including members of the Internet Café Operators Association, attended the first of the public hearings. School authorities voiced out their sentiments against the Internet cafés, which allow students to play computer games even during classes. The Internet café operators did not object to the proposal.

Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers.

SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	HI35° Lo 22°
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Hi 27° Lo 15°
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Hi 33° Lo 22°
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Hi 33° Lo 22°
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Hi 34° Lo 23°
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Hi 31° Lo 20°
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Hi 31° Lo 24°
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 23°
Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 33° Lo 24°
Roxas	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 20°
Cebu	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 31° Lo 25°
Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 31° Lo 24°
Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 25°
Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 30° Lo 23°
Davao	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 31° Lo 24°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research/03/19/02

RP-US war games threaten tribe with eviction

ZAMBOANGA CITY—At least 17 Subanen families in Barangay Limpapa here are expected to be displaced if the military and officials of the Zamboanga Ecozone and Freeport insisted on using their land as a venue for military exercises, according to lawyer Rejoice Sobejano, the legal counsel of the National Commission for Indigenous People (NCIP).

On Friday, a dialogue was held at a makeshift conference hall constructed by the military for the Balikatan exercises. Limpapa is 33 kilometers away from the city proper.

"We were never consulted. We were merely informed about what is good about the Balikatan exercises. Definitely, we support the Balikatan, but not here on our ancestral land," Timuay Noval Lambo, president of the Western Zamboanga Timuay Association Inc., (WEZTA), said.

Sobejano said the government failed to consider the rights of the indigenous people in Barangay Limpapa when it decided to use the land that the ecozone offered for the Balikatan jungle base.

"Technically, this is legally defective because the NCIP law, the Indigenous People's Rights Act of 1997 (RA 8371), specifically stated the right to prior consent of the people," Sobejano told the INQUIRER.

"What will happen to your constructed structures here? Are you going to pay the rent now?" Alberto de la Cruz, one of those who will be displaced, asked.

On De la Cruz's land, the military constructed a conference hall made of light materials, two toilets, a hanging bridge and three waiting sheds.

A certain Capt. Rojas told the Subanens: "You should be thankful that the structures are here although the Americans have not yet arrived."

Alberto claimed that he was not properly informed that his land was covered by the planned American jungle base. Jahira Hamid, 65, said she was not willing to give away her ancestral land.

"We have been evacuating from this place since the Japanese occupation," she said.

Another Subanen farmer, Fernando Guinilac, said a number of soldiers destroyed more than 100 banana plants "to do the survey."

"I was not informed. Worse, I was not paid for the damage they have done on my farm," Guinilac said.

Maria Socorro Cipriano, ecozone marketing specialist, explained to the Subanens that there was a series of consultations made before the use of the 50-hectare ancestral land for the establishment of a Balikatan jungle base was allowed.

Cipriano said that aside from the consultations made last year, meetings were held on Feb. 13 and 19 and March 9, "and your barangay chairman, Herman Gorit, and other officials were there."

"We even visited several families informing (them of) the said plan. We even dispatched ecozone personnel to this area to follow-up," Cipriano added.

Lawyer Merianthe Zuraek, Balikatan Human Rights Violation Monitoring chief, said both camps should enter into a compromise.

Zuraek said the ecozone and the military did their part in informing the people and the only way to address the issue "is to come up with a consensus."

But Max de Mesa, the TFDP's deputy executive director for operations in Mindanao, said the ecozone and the military have disregarded the Subanens' rights.

"It (consultation) should have been done before anything else, especially if their ancestral land is at stake," De Mesa said. ***Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Gov't to end subsidy to state schools in 2006

MATI, Davao Oriental—The government will stop subsidizing state colleges and universities that will force them to stop providing free, if not low-cost, education by 2006.

These schools will be forced to increase tuition to finance their operations.

"Due to lack of funds, government subsidy to the operational expenses of all state universities and colleges is expected to end in 2006. The state subsidy for all SCUs will only be in the form of payment for the salaries of its employees. In other words, the SCUs will now be treated like government-owned corporations as we are mandated to generate funds for our own operational expenses," Jonathan Bayogan, president of the Davao Oriental State College of Science and Technology, said.

Bayogan said the plan to stop government subsidy started a few years ago. It has been slowly implemented, he said.

Since 1999, the SCUs have already suffered an average of 40 percent in cuts in government subsidy.

The budget for the Davao Oriental State College of Science and Technology, for instance, was reduced from P37 million in 1999 to only P29 million this year.

To offset the diminishing state subsidy to the SCUs, Congress passed a law in 1997 that allowed these schools to jack up tuition.

Bayogan said RA 8292 or the Higher Education Modernization Act of 1997 "allows the schools' governing boards to fix tuition and other necessary school charges . . . as their respective boards may deem proper to impose after due consultations with the involved sectors." In a meeting last November, presidents of state colleges and universities agreed to increase tuition by at least 50 percent.

This was not the first time tuition had to be increased. Since 1998, an annual 50-100-percent increase in tuition among state universities and colleges was recorded. ***Ferdinand O. Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

CONSUMER-MEMBERS of the Pangasinan Electric Cooperative III (Panelco III) stage a rally March 13 in front of the Panelco III office in Urdaneta City as they call for the cooperative's General Manager, Rosalino Culalic, to resign from his post. RAY ZAMBRANO
ANELC
SOBRA NA... TAMA NA... PALITAN NA
DATI BA KA BUWAYA
POLICINA

Pangasinan townsfolk, officials seek ouster of power co-op head

DAGUPAN CITY—Local officials, businessmen and residents of eastern Pangasinan towns rallied against the general manager of the Pangasinan Electric Cooperative III in Urdaneta City for alleged embezzlement of the cooperative's funds.

The protesters demanded the ouster of Rosalino Culalic, Panelco III general manager, whom they accused of misusing the P71-million paid-up capital share of the 70,000 cooperative members.

Urdaneta Councilor Ramil San Juan said the Panelco collected P20 in monthly contribution from every consumer to raise P50,000 that was needed for registering the electric cooperative with the Cooperatives Development Authority.

San Juan claimed that part of the amount, which should have been deposited in a trust fund, was used by Culalic to pay the bond for cases that were filed against the Philippine Rural Electric Cooperative Association (Philreca), which Culalic heads.

"Part of the money was also used to buy electric poles and to pay the National Power Corp. The point is, since the money was supposed to be in a trust fund, it should not have been used for anything except for which it was intended for," San Juan said.

Culalic was invited by the Urdaneta City council to account for the money, but he never heeded the invitation, compelling the council to declare him *persona non grata* in the city, San Juan said.

It was learned that Culalic was out of the country when the rally was staged. He was reportedly attending a convention of the Philreca in the United States.

San Juan said that despite Culalic's absence, the rally was held because the National Electrification Administration was conducting an audit of the Panelco's financial standing.

It was learned from some Panelco III directors that the money was kept "intact" at a bank and that there was a bank certification that the money was deposited there.

"But the certification only showed the total amount which should have been deposited, not the balance," San Juan said.

The protesters also questioned Culalic on the awarding of a contract for meter reading and collection to a private company in which he is allegedly a director.

Culalic was also allegedly a member of a contracting firm that was awarded the rehabilitation of electric lines, but that he used another name in the Securities and Exchange Commission registration. ***Yolanda Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

Bayan Muna leader in Or. Mindoro shot dead

STO. TOMAS, Batangas—An elderly Bayan Muna coordinator in Oriental Mindoro was killed early last week by alleged government assassins, according to a report of the human rights group Karapatan-Southern Tagalog.

The report said Emilio Santillan, 75, of Barangay Del Pilar, Naujan, Oriental Mindoro, was riding his bicycle from a store near his house at about 4:30 p.m., March 12, when a maroon L-300 van stopped near him.

A person reportedly alighted from the van and held the Bayan Muna leader's left shoulder while pointing a gun at his head. The gunman shot Santillan in cold blood.

According to witnesses' testimony taken by the Karapatan-Mindoro Oriental, the killing of Santillan was the work of government soldiers who suspected the victim of being a supporter of the New People's Army.

Santillan was an active campaigner in Mindoro for the Bayan Muna during the partylist elections.

Karapatan said it had already asked the House of Representatives to conduct an investigation of Santillan's killing and the killing of five other leftist leaders in Southern Tagalog, but the request has not been acted upon.

Only last month, several members of the partylist group disappeared in Central Luzon. ***Romulo O. Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

Village councils tapped in fight vs drug gangs

LUCENA CITY—President Macapagal-Arroyo has asked the village peace and order councils to be the government's spies in the battle against drug syndicates.

Ms Macapagal urged the more than 500 members of the reorganized peace and order councils in the city's 33 barangays to report pushers or traffickers in their villages.

She likened the operation of a drug syndicate to a business enterprise with a network of supervising employees.

The President asked barangay officials to look for syndicate "employees" from among the people in the barangay.

"(Look for) the area manager of the drug syndicate in your locality. That's the number one task of the barangay," she told the village officials during their graduation held here Saturday.

"Where are they hiding? Where is their laboratory for the production of illegal drugs?" the President told the barangay officials. ***Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

World TB Day Commemoration 2002 Children's Advocacy to Stop TB

MESSAGES

My felicitations and congratulations to the organizers and participants of 2002 World TB Day Convention in Commemoration of Children's Advocacy to stop TB.

The Epidemic is global and effects all age groups. We commend the health workers who wholeheartedly persevere in addressing TB in the pediatric age group (up to 19 years). As well know, the specific age 1-5 are the most susceptible age group with our unified effort we hope we can be successful in controlling tuberculosis in our country.

More power and may you continuously inspire all of us to do our work.

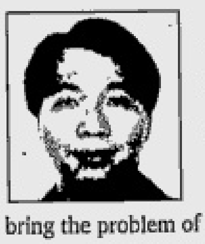
Mabuhay kayong lahat.

MANUEL M. DAYRIT, MD, MSC
Secretary of Health

The World TB Day Commemoration this year is unique in that, different departments of government are included and not the health department alone. Happily the children are recognized in this event with a convention at the Occupational Safety and Healthy Center, Quezon City and informative speakers on Children's Advocacy to stop TB.

All interested in children's health and wellbeing are enthusiastically attending this assembly to be clarified on TB and role of children in a global epidemic of Tuberculosis. We await outcome of these two important events on March 22 and 23, 2002.

FE DEL MUNDO, MD., MA.
Chair, Center for TB in Children
Over-All Chair, ORganizing Committe
Children's Advocacy AGAINST TB



THE PHILIPPINE Coalition Against Tuberculosis (PhilCAT) greets the organizers of the Children's Advocacy, to stop TB, one of the highlights of World TB Day 2002. Under the able leadership of Dra. Fe del Mundo we laud our partners and colleagues in the campaign to bring the problem of TB especially in the children to the consciousness of the Filipino public.

Charles Y. Yu
CHARLES Y. YU
Philippine Coalition Against Drugs Chairman

GREETINGS to the members of Children's advocacy to stop TB, the organizers and the delegates of the World TB Day 2002.

It is with great pride and honor to be among the distinguished and dedicated group of health workers who have been working wholeheartedly to control, if not eradicate, Tuberculosis in our country, particularly in children. I would also like to personally commend our National Scientist, Dr. Fe del Mundo, who has been working tirelessly in preparation for this undertaking.

And to all the delegates, may this World TB Day commemoration serve as an inspiration for all of us to stop TB, fight poverty. Do it with dots.

MADELEINE R. VALERA, MD., MScCHHM
Chair, World TB Day Commemoration
Vice President
Quality Assurance Research and Policy Development Group

Member Organizations:
DOH TB Task Force in Children●Center for TB in Children, Philippines●Philippine Pediatric Society●Pediatrics Infections Diseases Society of the Philippines●PAPA●World Vision●CPSP●FNRI●RITM UST●UP PGH●QC Health Department

March 23, 2002, 8:00-5:00 pm Saturday Occupational Safety & Health Center Auditorium North Avenue, corner Agham Road Quezon City

Pediatricians, family and achool physicians, healthworkers, government and private doctors and all TB advocates are invited to join this first meeting among TB workers and caregivers. Registration is free.

PROGRAMME

7:30-8:30 REGISTRATION
8:30-8:40 INVOCATION (ROSARIO CARRETERO, MD)
8:40-8:45 NATIONAL ANTHEM (LOLITA SORIANO, MD)
8:45-9:00 WELCOME ADDRESS (DULCE ESTRELLA GUST, MD,Executive Director-OSHC)
9:00-9:30 OVERVIEW OF THE COMMEMORATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF PARTICIPANTS (FE del MUNDO, MD, MA,Over-All Chair, Children's Advocacy CTCP Founder & President)
9:30-9:45 INTRODUCTION OF THE KEYNOTE SPEAKER (CARMELO ALFILER, MD,Co-Chair,Children's Advocacy PPS President)
9:45-10:30 KEYNOTE ADDRESS (Hon. MANUEL DAYRIT) Secretary, Department of Health
10:30-11:00 INTERMISSION & COFFEE BREAK (PANGKAT KAWAYAN)
11:00-12:00 PRESENTATION OF PHILHEALTH OUTPATIENT BENEFIT PACKAGE FOR TB IN CHILDREN (MADELEINE VALERA,MD, MSc CHHM Over-all Chair, WORLD TB Day Phils. 2002
12:00-1:30 LUNCHEON SYMPOSIUM
WHO: UPDATE & FUTURE DIRECTIONS
TB GLOBAL FUND
PIETER VAN MAAREN,
MD Medical Officer, Tuberculosis
WHO, Western Pacific Regional Office
INTRODUCTION OF THE GUEST SPEAKER BY:
VIRGINIA IRENE SANTOS, MD
1:30-3:00 PRESENTATION OF ACTIVITIES & RESEARCHERS By ORGANIZATIONS, MEDICAL SCHOOLS & CENTERS INVOLCED IN CHILDHOOD TB ADVOCACY (JAIME SANTOS, MD President, PIDSPI
3:00-3:15 COFFEE BREAK
3:15-4:00 OPEN FORUM ON PRESENTATIONS
Moderators:
LUZ PALATTAO-CORPUS, MD
MANUEL M. PO, MD
4:00 CLOSING REMARKS RODRIGO ROMULO, MD
Immediate Past President PHILCAT

MASTER OF CEREMONIES-GUIA ISON, MD, MPH

ORGANIZING COMMITTEE
Fe Del Mundo, MD, MA
Over-all Chair
Carmelo Alfiler, MD
Co-Chair
Advisers
Myrna Cabotaje, MD, MPH
Elvira S.N. Dayrit, MD, MPH
Ma. Paz Ugalde, MD, MPH
Registration
Regina Tan, MD (OSHC)
Scientific
Luz Palattao-Corpuz, MD (CTCP Trustee)
Manuel M. Po, MD (CTCP Trustee, CPSP President)
Jaime Santos, MD (PIDSPI President)
Invitations
Miguel Noche, MD (UST Chair, Dept. of Pediatrics)
Carole Sibulo, MD (UST)
Ways & Means
Virginia Irene R. Santos, MD (CTCP P.R.O.)
Documentaion
Belen Santiago, MD-CTCP Secretary
Loudes L. Mata, MD-CTCP O.I.C.
FDMMC Resident Doctors
Publicity
Merle Sacdalan, MD (CTC Trustee)
Melvin Magno, MD (World Vision President)
Physical Arrangements
Salvador Franco , DDM (CTCP Trustee)
Regina Cailao, MD (CTCP Trustee)

All interested organizations or individuals, please call 951-9194, for inquiries or to register as a member of Children's Advocacy against TB, or fax 951-0590

This publication is made possible by a CME grant from Glaxo Smithkline

gsk GlaxoSmithKline

GMA sees nothing unusual in more US troops

From page A1

doubt this (exercise) again."

Lozada said the requested deployment of more American troops, ostensibly for civic action, strengthened the suspicion that the United States had long-term plans here.

He also said this required a new TOR because the existing document "specifies no more than 660 US troops."

Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes said the request was still being discussed at the "lower level," meaning the Balikatan directors and defense officials.

"It is still up in the air and is being discussed and has not yet reached the level of the President," he said.

Bigger picture

The President echoed Reyes' statement, saying there was no agreement yet between the two countries on the matter.

But she said, "Let's look at the (bigger) picture," referring to the VFA, which provides the legal framework for the presence of US troops in the country.

She also said that after the US forces had been exposed to the economic conditions in Basilan, "they now want that the civic component in future Balikatan exercises will be strengthened."

Rigoberto Tiglao, spokesperson for the President, earlier said the 300 additional US troops would be utilized for civic work in Basilan, home of the notorious Abu Sayyaf.

As many as 160 US Green Berets are already in Basilan, and 500 other servicemen are in Zamboanga and Cebu cities.

At his regular briefing yesterday, Tiglao said the proposed deployment was a result of "very informal assessments" made by US and Filipino military officials in Basilan.

He said the extra soldiers would engage in such activities as the building of clinics and quick medical procedures like harelip surgery.

"The assessment of our people on the ground is that it's impossible to ask the existing American forces, who are training our troops for combat medical needs, to undertake, for instance, harelip operations," Tiglao said.

He said the US troops in Basilan were busy training 14 Philippine military battalions, and "one US (soldier) can't be all-around."

"What (the US is) saying is that there is a big possibility for them to really help Basilan, and this is all under the US Armed Forces budget," he said.

Doubt

Biazon recalled that past military exercises saw the participation of more than 63,000 US troops on the ground and thousands more as support personnel.

"I don't care if there will be a division of 15,000 American troops in Basilan as long as they are going to build roads, schoolhouses and bridges or give medical and dental treatment, as long as their presence does not involve combat actions," he said.

Biazon said the "benefit of the doubt" was extended to Malacañang although the TOR had earlier allowed the deployment of two US soldiers to accompany a rifle company in combat operations, and permitted US commanders to take unilateral actions.

The latter provision, he noted, was later stricken off the final exercise plan.

"For as long as the US forces stay out of combat involvement, amending the (TOR) may be supported" he added.

But Lozada told the INQUIRER that he was worried about the request for additional troops.

"They should be very clear in their intentions," he said. "It seems there is an overuse of the al-Qaida as an excuse for their activities in different countries including the Philippines." Lozada said that with its sophisticated weapons system and intelligence network, the United States should have informed the Philippines in advance of the supposed al-Qaida expansion.

He said that since Balikatan 02-1 was in progress and on schedule, Filipino troops should have learned enough on how to deal with the Abu Sayyaf.

Question mark

"This (request) is a big question mark," Lozada said. "I don't think there's a need for that FBI guy (US Federal Bureau of Investigation director Robert Mueller) to come here to talk about the al-Qaida because Balikatan 02-1 is ongoing. So what is really going on, I want to know."

Lozada said, "unverified reports" on the proposed deployment were boosting "fears that they (the US) do not want to get out of the Philippines."

"Is this Balikatan 02-2 already or what?" he said. "I think we deserve a clarification."

Lozada also said the Philippine government should seek a categorical statement from the US government on the real purpose and extent of its presence in the country, and subsequently explain this to the people.

"We don't want to go into the same mess again," he said, referring to the controversy that marked the launch of Balikatan 02-1.

Lozada said the Philippine government should negotiate a separate TOR for the requested deployment.

"Why can't the existing troops undertake these (civic) activities? In fact they are already conducting civic and medical missions (in Basilan)," he said.

Lozada's committee conducted a joint inquiry with the House defense committee on Balikatan 02-1, which led to the formal signing of the TOR before the exercise went into full blast.

Amendment

Balikatan co-director Brig. Gen. Emmanuel Teodosio said the possible amendment of the TOR was being discussed.

But he said there might even be no need for an amendment as the number of US troops could drop from 660 when certain US personnel wrap up training and go home.

When this happens, the US engineers expected to engage in civic projects can come in as replacements, he said in a phone interview.

THE TRAINING of Filipino soldiers by US Special Forces continues at Campo Uno in Lamitan, Basilan. EDWIN BACASMAS

According to Teodosio, the requested deployment was sparked by the Americans' "apprehension" that the construction of roads and bridges might not be done in six months.

To speed up the process, he said, the US engineering battalion would be supported by the AFP engineering units.

Teodosio cited surveys supposedly showing that the people of Basilan were in favor of the additional deployment.

Reyes confirmed this saying: "It is being floated around by both sides. There are people of Basilan (and) of the Zamboanga peninsula who want it, and from what I hear, the rapport, cooperation and camaraderie between Filipinos and their US counterparts in Balikatan are going very well."

"The chemistry is there, so we anticipate that we will do more," he said in a phone interview.

Reyes made similar statements to reporters at the headquarters of the Army's Task Group Panay in Camp Adriano Hernandez in Dingle town, 38 kilometers north of Iloilo City.

He said there was "no escalation" of US military activities in the country, and denied that the requested deployment was a "cover" to legitimize combat operations by American troops.

Reyes was guest speaker at rites yesterday marking the 57th anniversary of the liberation of Panay, Romblon and Guimaras from Japanese occupation.

But Siegfred Deduro, a convenor of the multisectoral group, Panay-Guimaras Movement for National Sovereignty, said: "It is ironic that while we commemorate the liberation of Panay from foreign troops, the militarist Reyes is making a desperate pitch for more American troops."

Stepping up its opposition, the militant fisherfolk group Pamalakaya issued a statement in Manila urging legislators to block the requested deployment and lodge a diplomatic protest against the US government. ***With reports from Martin P. Marfil and Gerald G. Lacuarta in Manila; Nestor P. Burgos Jr., PDI Visayas Bureau***

DFA admits 'serious' shortage of passports

From page A1

denied it was the cause of the problem.

"We are trying to find out if there was a problem in the distribution or delivery. We actually just started the investigation, so we have yet to establish what exactly caused the shortage," Lecaros said. "The increase in demand is expected but we have to have enough supply of blank passports to cover the demand."

Guingona's consultant

But a DFA source who declined to be named blamed Vic Luna, a consultant of Vice President and Foreign Secretary Teofisto Guingona Jr., for the serious shortfall. His accusation came in the wake of reports earlier this year of an alleged turf war between Guingona and former DFA Secretary Roberto Romulo, the presidential adviser on international competitiveness.

Lecaros himself could not say whether or not the shortfall could be attributed to the delay in the implementation of the so-called Machine Readable Passports and Visas (MRP/V) system, which was supposed to have been operational in February.

As early as 1999, the DFA had already awarded the P4-billion MRP/V contract to BCA International.

But last October, Luna reportedly demanded that a rebidding be made. Luna reportedly argued that the party named in the agreement should be BCA International, which won the bidding, and not the consortium called Philippine Passport Corp. The BCA had changed its name to PPC.

Due to Luna's protest, the DFA sought the legal opinion of the Department of Justice and the National Economic Development Authority, which oversees all build-operate-transfer agreements entered into by the government.

Luna reportedly recommended that an information technology firm identified as Provi handle the computerization of passports while the MRP/V contract was under review.

The source said the DFA ordered passports from the BSP only in August last year, because department officials were expecting the MRP/V to be operational by February.

"In short, the DFA placed its order for passports very late. The DFA should have placed the order as early as January last year, instead of August," the source said.

Guingona has directed the DFA and the BSP to sit down and discuss the cause of the problem and to put up immediate remedial measures. "The Vice President wants the problem solved as soon as possible, preferably this week," Lecaros said.

Guingona has also asked the BSP to work "double time" in printing the new passports. Lecaros said Guingona and BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura have already agreed to expedite the printing of additional blank passports.

One of the remedial measures being set up, Lecaros said, was the hiring of 40 additional personnel for the passport division. At least 28 counters process passports in the head office.

Lecaros said there seemed to have been a problem in prioritizing the applications.

"For example, if the 2,000 quota was met today, the papers of the 2001st applicant should be the first to be processed so the applicant will not go back to the first step of the procedure," he said. The DFA head office has an allocation of 2,000 passports a day.

DFA and BSP officials yesterday met to thresh out the problems.

"The Vice President is concerned that those abroad cannot come home or that they cannot extend their stay abroad (because of) the absence of their passports," Lecaros said.

Gov't gets Danding . . .

From page A1

In its March 14 decision, the anti-graft court's fourth division said the Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG) was the "legal owner" of the shares. The PCGG has been contesting the ownership of the shares in a civil case since 1987.

The forfeited blocs included the 46,626 shares held by Cojuangco, and another 198,052 shares that he controlled along with Jose Y. Campos and Cesar Zalamea.

But the court ruled that the other defendants in the case—the late Hans M. Menzi and current Bulletin chair Emilio Yap—maintained shares that were "not ill-gotten wealth of the defendant Marcos spouses."

It referred to the 154,472 shares which Menzi sold to US Automotive Co., Inc.; Yap's 2,617 shares; and the "1 Bulletin share" in the name of the Estate of Hans M. Menzi.

Damages

The Sandiganbayan, however, denied "for lack of sufficient evidence" the PCGG claim for P50 billion in moral and P1 billion in exemplary damages against the defendants.

The second Cojuangco bloc in question was transferred to HM Holdings and Management Inc. on Aug. 17, 1983. The holding company sold the shares to Bulletin Publishing Corp. on Feb. 21, 1986 for P19.3 million.

Proceeds of the sale were then frozen through a writ of sequestration issued by the PCGG in February 1987. The original amount, placed in a time deposit account with PhilTrust Bank, had since grown to P104.96 million as of February 2002.

The Sandiganbayan's fourth division, chaired by Associate Justice Narciso Nario, also declared the P104.96 million forfeited in favor of the government.

In July 1987, the government sued Cojuangco, Yap, Menzi, and the Marcos couple for using ill-gotten wealth to acquire shares in the newspaper. Yap and Cojuangco were accused of acting as dummies for the Marcoses.

But the government was not able to prove that Yap was a Marcos dummy, the court said, noting that Yap acquired his shares even before Ferdinand Marcos became President.

American founder

Menzi bought the entire Bulletin in 1957 from the firm's American founder Carson Taylor. Yap bought shares through Menzi in 1961. Menzi died on July 27, 1984, in Manila, and his estate has since been represented in the case by Manuel G. Montesillo.

The Sandiganbayan ruled that Cojuangco, Campos and Zalamea "are nominees of defendant Ferdinand Marcos" and that the shares held by the three "are ill-gotten wealth of the defendant Marcos spouses."

Campos and Zalamea, though, were not included among the respondents.

The court noted that Campos, in his November 1994 deposition taken in Vancouver, Canada, testified that he held shares in the Bulletin upon the "instructions of President Marcos."

Campos also admitted that he received "three dividend checks from the Bulletin for the benefit of President Marcos."

For his part, Zalamea declared in his October 1987 deed of assignment that he "does not claim true and beneficial ownership" of the Bulletin shares registered in his name. He voluntarily waived ownership of the shares and assigned them to the PCGG.

It was Cojuangco who kept denying that he acquired Bulletin shares as a Marcos "dummy," saying he bought into the firm "upon the request and as nominee of the late Menzi who owned and delivered to him the shares."

But the court said Cojuangco "did not present any evidence to establish, as a fact, this particular defense of his."

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BEST COPY AVAILABLE

FBI chief to RP: We want Mr. Jimenez

From page A1

The controversial businessman, whom Estrada had once described as a "corporate genius," has been seen lately with President Macapagal-Arroyo accompanying her at the Philippine Racing Club, distributing goods to the poor in Tondo, Manila, and hobnobbing with the privileged few allowed to attend the Edsa II anniversary rites.

Jimenez, who has launched a feeding program for indigent children in his district, said his encounters with Ms Macapagal were "rare."

Even so, Mueller is leaving nothing to chance.

"We discussed (the issue of Jimenez) today at the Department of Justice and I raised with President (Macapagal)-Arroyo our desire to have him extradited expeditiously—under the legal procedures in the Philippines," Mueller said.

In a separate news briefing, Justice Secretary Hernando Perez said he assured Mueller that the Philippine government was doing its best to expedite the extradition of Jimenez.

"He (Mueller) asked about the case. We told him that we had already presented our evidence and it shall now be the turn of Congressman Jimenez to present his evidence," Perez said.

Workings of RP democracy

He said he explained to Mueller the workings of "Philippine democracy."

"I pointed out to him that one of the institutions brought to the Philippines by the Americans is democracy. And under a democratic system everyone has the right to be heard," Perez said.

"The Philippine Bill of Rights was basically copied from the American Constitution and we should give Congressman Jimenez a fair hearing, which is being done now."

In his media briefing, Mueller said Jimenez's case was "an important extradition case" among several others involving Filipino citizens wanted in the United States.

"It is important we work with our judicial systems to accomplish the cooperation that is necessary to assure that those who break the laws are brought to justice and brought to justice swiftly," he said.

Mueller said there were several Filipinos in the United States whom the Philippine government also wanted extradited.

He did not name names, but he was obviously referring to Charlie "Atong" Ang and Yolanda Ricaforte. Both fled to the United States before they could be charged in the same plunder case involving Estrada.

"We are working closely (with Manila) to ensure that these individuals are extradited to the Philippines," Mueller said.

In his talk with the INQUIRER, Jimenez said he didn't find such an exchange fair. He said such an exchange would only be fair if both cases involved heinous crimes.

"I'm surprised. My case is (giving) political contributions, and there's no such thing as exchange for such a case," he said.

Jimenez earlier expressed willingness to cooperate with state prosecutors to gather evidence on Estrada's alleged illegal accumulation of wealth.

But he was later dropped as a potential state witness when the depositions he had submitted proved insufficient.

Court battle

Upon request by the US government, the Department of Justice filed a petition for his extradition in the Manila Regional Trial Court on March 18, 2001. Earlier, the Supreme Court ruled that it was implicit in the extradition treaty between Manila and Washington that there should be "an unbending commitment" that neither government should coddle criminals.

Jimenez moved for reconsideration on Nov. 29 but the high tribunal denied his appeal on Feb. 7, 2001, removing all legal obstacles to the extradition proceedings at the Manila RTC.

Jimenez asked the RTC not to issue a warrant of arrest against him. But after a series of hearings and the presentation of several documents by both parties, the court issued a warrant for his arrest on July 3, 2001 and recommended a bail of P1 million. He immediately posted bail.

On Aug. 31, the court ordered the DOJ to mark its exhibits and to file its formal offer of evidence and memorandum not later than 30 days after the termination of the markings.

The DOJ filed its formal offer of evidence and memorandum on Jan. 5. Jimenez received his copy two days later but argued that it did not include a copy of the marked exhibits.

The court, however, ordered Jimenez to start marking his exhibits and to file his formal offer of evidence and memorandum within 30 days. ***With report from AFP***

Al-Qaida out to get nukes, US warns

From page A1

around the world to be on the alert for any efforts or attempts by terrorist groups to obtain weapons of mass destruction," Mueller said.

His comments came in the wake of a US request to bring in anywhere from 300 to a thousand more troops to the country, to serve as "civic action personnel." Some 660 American soldiers are currently training Filipino troops in counter-terrorism under the Balikatan 02-1 program to help defeat the Abu Sayyaf bandit group, which Washington has linked to the al-Qaida.

Mueller said it was clear that the al-Qaida had established a presence in Southeast Asia and that the United States and its allies in the region were on the alert against possible new attacks by the group.

"Without question or doubt, we believe the al-Qaida operatives are in this area," he said.

He singled out the militant Jemaah Islamiah (JI) group as linked to Bin Laden's network and said that JI also had ties in several countries, including Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia.

Security forces in Singapore, Malaysia and the Philippines have detained dozens of Islamic militants in recent weeks on suspicion they might be linked to JI.

"We are working together to put all the pieces in the puzzle . . . so that we can have a fuller portrait of the al-Qaida's presence in the region."

Mueller made the comments after calling on the President and the National Bureau of Investigation, an agency modeled after the FBI. He left for the United States last night, a day after arriving on the last leg of a five-nation swing in Southeast Asia.

Technical assistance

National Security Adviser Roilo Golez told reporters Mueller had offered to provide "technical assistance" in tracking down funds of terror groups as well as share information obtained from members of the al-Qaida and the Taliban regime captured in the Afghanistan conflict. He said Mueller offered to give the government "better access" to US data under the RP-US Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty.

Mueller said the FBI also believed strongly that Bin Laden, the suspected mastermind behind the Sept. 11 terrorist strike in the United States, was still alive and active.

The FBI director had lunch with the President, Golez, presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao, US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone and FBI agents Dennis Pierce and James Nixon joining them.

Golez said the FBI chief thanked Ms Macapagal again for her strong support for the US-led anti-terrorism campaign. The President asked the FBI director to help train NBI agents in running after money launderers. Golez said they also discussed the need for an anti-terrorism law, which the President said will be included in her legislative agenda.

Golez said the FBI training would begin "very soon. In fact some of them are already ongoing."

Justice Secretary Hernando Perez said that Mueller had agreed to train NBI agents at the FBI's main office. "They (FBI officials) will set up a seminar for trainers in the US for crime investigation, case buildup and use of modern technology."

"In other words, our trainers will be trained so that they, in turn, will be training other people all over the Philippines. And the center is also the FBI."

Currently, Undersecretary Jose Calida, Chief State Prosecutor Jovencito Zuño and State Prosecutor Emmanuel Velasco are at the FBI Academy in Quantico, Virginia, to attend a 10-day training course on anti-terrorism. The program started on March 11.

Shortly before the press briefing, Mueller had a quick meeting with Philippine National Police (PNP) Director General Leandro Mendoza, PNP Director Lucas Managuelod, Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines chief Cpl. Victor Corpus, and Immigration and Deportation Commissioner Andrea Domingo.

"It is critically important that FBI works with counterparts around the world to exchange information to prevent another Sept. 11 from happening whether in the United States or in the Philippines or Thailand or Singapore, or any other country," the FBI chief said at the briefing.

Mueller said his trip was also meant to get to know senior law enforcers in the area personally.

"It is the personal relationships that enable you to work closely together in law enforcement," he said. "In the wake of Sept. 11, we all understand there is no agency and no country that can address terrorism alone."

In a brief speech before fielding questions, Mueller repeatedly stated that the war on terror is not a war on Islam.

"Since Sept. 11, we have had more than 325 investigations against those who would assault or harass our Muslim Americans," he said. "The war on terror is a war against individuals and not against communities or religions."

The heat is on . . .

From page A1

Quezon City.

"This rise in temperature really comes during this time of year. It coincides with Holy Week," Dr. Prisco Nilo, chief of the weather branch of the Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa).

He said he expected the high temperatures to last until May.

Winter ends

Nilo explained that the winter season in the Northern Hemisphere, from where the cold northeasterly winds that the country felt the past two months, had just ended.

The winds now blowing into the country are coming from the Pacific Ocean where air temperatures are higher.

Yesterday's weather was more bearable than the day before. The maximum temperature recorded at the Science Garden was 34.5 degrees at 1:45 p.m. In the morning the temperature was much lower at 20.8 degrees.

Last year, the highest temperature recorded in March was 36 degrees. Days could be hotter in April. The hottest day for April was recorded in 1990 at 37.9 degrees.

Today, the temperature for Metro Manila is forecast at 22 to 35 degrees. In Baguio City, where the temperature dropped to as low as 8.8 degrees on Jan. 4, the temperature is expected to range from 15 to 27 degrees.

The hottest day is yet to come, according to Pagasa weather forecaster Francis Aranador.

"The heat brought by the easterly wave from the Pacific Ocean is just setting in. We expect temperatures to rise," Aranador said.

El Niño

But Nilo said the heat wasn't yet part of the El Niño, since this weather phenomenon was predicted to come by July or August.

El Niño is a large-scale oceanographic weather phenomenon that develops in the equatorial Pacific Ocean, and is associated with extreme climatic variability such as heavy rains, winds and drought.

It is the migration, from time to time, of warm surface waters from the western equatorial Pacific basin to the eastern equatorial Pacific region, along the coasts of Peru and Ecuador. This condition can prevail for more than a year, adversely affecting economies in both local and global scales.

During an El Niño episode, the western Pacific region, including the Philippines, experiences rainfall deficiencies and drier than normal climate conditions due to a smaller number of tropical cyclones and suppressed monsoon activity, according to Pagasa's Climatology and Agrometeorology Branch (CAB).

Drought

In the Philippines, the effects of El Niño, like a water shortage and drought, are likely to be felt, initially in Mindanao, starting October this year.

"It is expected to last through the first half of 2003, affect other parts of the country, and impact on the different sectors of the community, notably water, agricultural, power, health and environment sectors, resulting in production losses that translate to significant socioeconomic imbalances in the country," the CAB said.

"Although the forecast is for a weak or 'mild' El Niño, as compared to the strong and devastating El Niño episode of 1997-1998, the various sectors and the general public are still urged to institute the necessary preparedness and mitigation measures," it said.

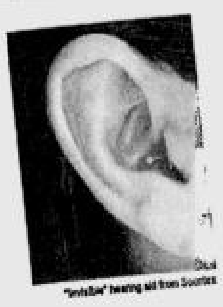
The CAB said it was still expecting the regular rainy season from the second half of May to September over the western parts of the country. This period is associated with the southwest monsoon.

Senate Majority Leader Loren Legarda nevertheless urged the government to build rice supplies above the usual two to three months buffer stock.

She was echoing an advisory of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization to the Philippines and other Southeast Asian countries.

In a statement, Legarda said the UN warning was in anticipation of the reduced agricultural output in the region due to the coming of the drought-inducing weather phenomenon.

Legarda noted that Malaysia was expecting a 30-percent drop in its agricultural output while Indonesia was stepping up its purchase of rice, the region's staple food.



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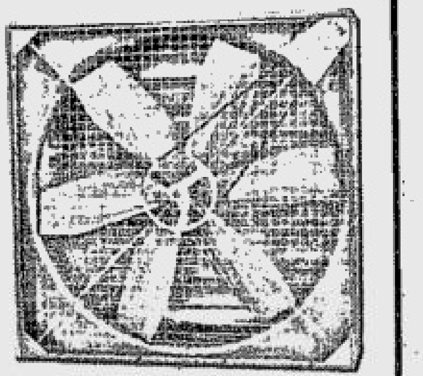

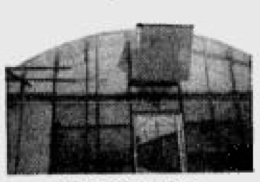

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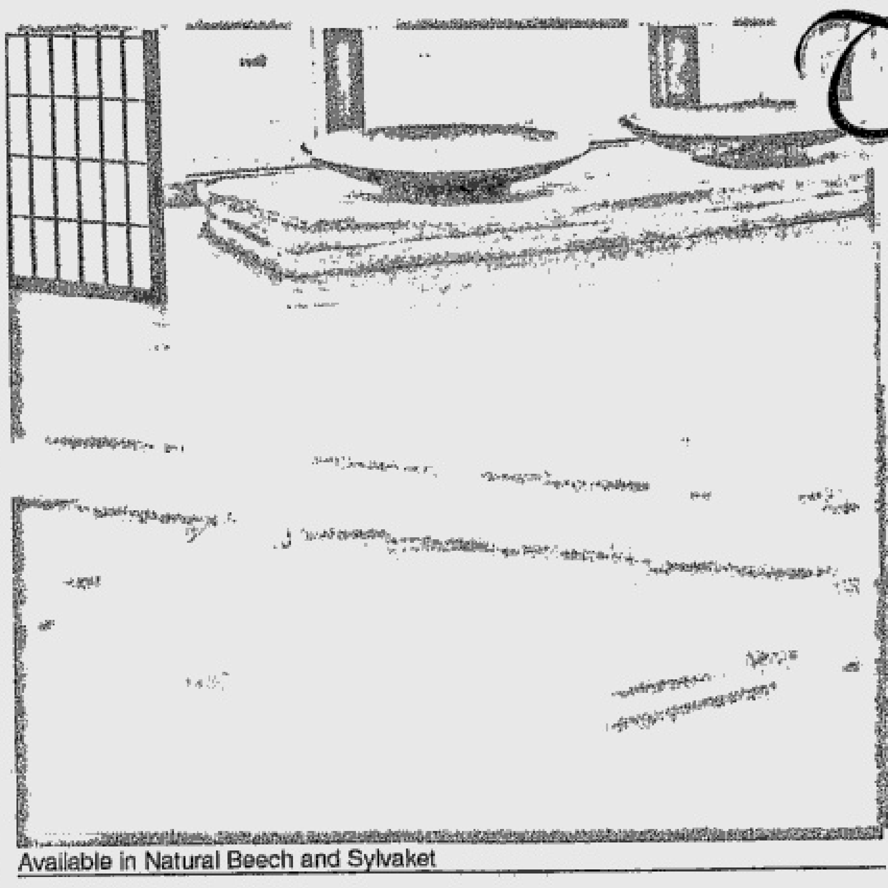

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Editor Al S. Mendoza ◉ Assistant Editor Edwin M. Villanueva

Nassau tennis official ball

SPORTS Resources Inc., exclusive Philippine distributor of Nassau products and Sporting Edge Management Group, recently signed a Memorandum of Agreement which makes Nassau as the official ball of the 2002 12 leg Age Group Tennis Challenge. The MOA was both concluded by Rodolfo S. Claudio, president/GM of SRI, Ms Liza Enciso, product manager and Ben M. Natividad, president/CEO of SEMG, organizer.

SPORTS ON TV

Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

TENNIS: Pacific Life Open, Final Round at 9 a.m. (r), Highlights at 9 p.m. on Star Sports

GOLF: Golfglobe 2002 at 11:30 a.m. (r) on Star Sports

PGA Bay Hill Invitational, Second Round at 2 p.m. (r) on Star Sports

LPGA Ping Banner Health, Final Round at 8:30 p.m. (r) on ESPN

BASKETBALL: US NCAA – WAC Championship at 1 p.m. on ESPN

GOVERNORS CUP

Purefoods stakes lead vs Shell

Teams	W	L
Purefoods	5	1
Red Bull	5	1
Talk N Text	4	1
Coca-Cola	5	2
Hapee-RP	4	2
Alaska	3	3
Fedex	3	4
Sta. Lucia	2	4
San Miguel	2	4
Selecta-RP	2	5
Ginebra	1	5
Shell	1	5

GAME TODAY
(Cuneta Astrodome)
6p.m.—Shell vs Purefoods

By June Navarro

ENDS meet as pacesetter Purefoods and tailender Shell face each other today in the PBA Samsung Governors Cup at the Cuneta Astrodome.

Interim coach Ryan Gregorio and his TJ Hotdogs are on a two-game roll, defeating Selecta-RP and San Miguel Beer in succession to join Batang Red Bull at the top of the heap at 5-1.

A third straight win for the Hotdogs in the 6 p.m. confrontation seems palatable as Gregorio's wards are peaking at the right time as far as import chemistry is concerned.

Derrick Brown and Leonard White have been delivering while getting a boost, defensively, from the locals.

While the Hotdogs are gifted with a dynamic coach and a perfectly blended crew, these blessings cannot be said about the Shell Turbochargers.

The Turbochargers, who live and die with the all-around performance of Askia Jones, have yet to learn the ropes of the amateur format as they continue to spiral downwards.

Although Chris Jackson was the only player on loan to the national training squad, the Turbochargers couldn't get their act together, falling one game after the other to the disappointment of the Shell faithful.

They are deep in the pit of the 12-team conference, fumbling in the dark together with Barangay Ginebra as they both carry 1-5 records.

GREGORIO

Bu Winningham, Ski Jones' import partner, has been a non-factor so far after failing to lend his expertise to the Turbochargers' cause.

Winningham scored just 8 points during Shell's 82-69 debacle against Hapee-RP Team in an out-of-town match in Malolos, Bulacan last week.

Jones and Winningham are again expected to break Shell's losing spell, now counting to four and perhaps extend to five should they remain pathetic against the Hotdogs.

Eagles turn Professional

THE TPG Davao Eagles have grown bigger taller and bigger. They deserve a new tag—Professional Davao Eagles.

Vito Orcullo, vice president for Mindanao of the sponsoring The Professional Group (TPG), said the change in name is in conformity with the dynamic and fighting image they are trying to project for the Eagles in this year's Metropolitan Basketball Association which opens on April 6.

Battered underneath the basket last year, the Eagles recruited six players, none below 6-foot-3, in order to keep up with the other MBA teams, particularly those in the Southern Conference.

Aside from 6-foot-6 Billy Mamaril, new coach Bong Go have enlisted the services of 6-5 Jan Montalbo, formerly of Cebu; 6-4 ½ Jon Dan Salvador of College of St. Benilde; 6-4 Cid White, formerly of Negros; 6-4 Brandon Sison, and 6-3 Glenn Peter Yap.

Orcullo bared that White is arriving today or tomorrow to sign up while Alaska has reportedly agreed to release Yap.

Returning to the Eagles fold are 5-10 Michael Manigo, 6-0 Bong Marata, 6-0 Genesis Sasuman, 6-4 ½ Rolly Menor, 6-5 Erian Daja, 6-2 Dennis Concha and 6-0 Peter June Simon, the 2001 Discovery of the Year.

Lawyer Emmanuel Ridad has been named general manager and Michael Sison team manager of the Eagles, who've been bracketed with the Cebuana Lhuillier Gems, the Cagayan de Oro Amigos and the RCPI Negros Slashers.

Hewitt Masters champ

HEWITT: Dominating. AP

INDIAN WELLS, California— US Open champion Lleyton Hewitt added his first elite Tennis Masters Series title to his resume here Sunday with a dominating victory over Tim Henman in the Indian Wells final.

Hewitt, who finished 2001 as the youngest player to hold the year-end world number one ranking, dispatched the ninth-seeded Briton 6-1, 6-2 in one hour and 21 minutes.

"Dominating, that's a big word," said the top-seeded Australian, who wasn't quite ready to apply it to himself. "I wouldn't say dominating.

"I give myself a chance every time I step on the court. I have been playing strong in the big matches when it counts. It gets to a big match, a big-time, show-time match, and I go out there and play with no fear."

Despite Hewitt's generous remark that the match was tighter than the scoreline suggested, Henman won just one service game throughout, his serve and volley attack thwarted by Hewitt's speed around the court and crisp passing shots.

Hewitt collected the winner's prize of $392,000 and moved up from 41st prior to the tournament to fifth in the ATP Champions race. He remains first on the ATP entry system list.

UAAP-NCAA clash looms

By Dennis U. Eroa

FANS salivating for the long-awaited clash between the best UAAP and NCAA basketball teams may no longer wait for long.

This developed yesterday as the INQUIRER learned that ABS-CBN, the giant broadcasting and television network, will also get the exclusive right to telecast the NCAA, the country's oldest collegiate league. ABS-CBN has been covering the UAAP the past two years.

The contract signing transpired at the Don Eugenio Lopez Center in Quezon City. Among the notables present during the signing were ABS-CBN chair and chief executive officer Gabby Lopez, Freddie Garcia, president and chief operating officer, senior vice president Nick Gabunada and project director for sports Peter Musngi, also station manager of dzMM.

Members of the NCAA policy board headed by San Beda rector Fr. Anscar Chupongco, Fr. Bede Hechanova, chair of 2002-2003 management committee, and Dr. Oscar Suarez, president of PCU graced the signing.

Also present were Letran's Fr. Ed Alaurin, SSC's Frank Gusi, Mapua's Fernando Lozano, Henry Atayde, presenting Bro. Rolly Dizon, Wilfredo Fortez of the UPHR, PCU's Alfredo Olano, CSB's Mark Galido, and Delfin Asistio and Crisostomo Cayetano of JRU.

San Beda College is host of the 78th edition of the NCAA.

In an earlier interview, Musngi, whose adept handling contributed to the success of the UAAP coverage, said with the new development, holding the so-called Battle of Champions is very possible. With Bantay Bata as beneficiary, the much-awaited event is tentatively scheduled in October after the end of the collegiate basketball season.

YMCA Makati offers swimming lessons

THE YMCA of Makati Inc. is offering swimming lessons and other sports programs from April 1-May 24. The Monday to Friday swimming classes have the following schedule: First batch (April 1-12), second (April 15-26), third (April 29-May 10) and fourth (May 13-24). For more details, call 899-6380 to 82, 899-6101, 899-6103 and 899-6105.

Athletes' dorm construction up, says Eric

By Marc Anthony Reyes

PHILIPPINE Sports Commission chair Eric Buhain yesterday said the construction of a four-story dormitory will soon begin as National Housing Authority personnel have started surveying possible sites inside the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex.

Hoping to finally move the national athletes out of the ramshackle dwellings under the football and track and field stadium, Buhain said the NHA and the bankrolling Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation have been sending "very positive" feedback on the project.

"I told them (NHA and Pagcor officials) that if the government can help poor people get a house of their own, maybe they can also help our national athletes," said Buhain of his project which has been the foremost clamor of the athletes for many years.

Buhain said he is still not sure how much would the construction cost but stressed that they have identified at least two possible sites of the dorms: The open space between Ninoy Aquino Stadium and the oval, and the spare tennis courts near the gymnastics association office.

He said they have agreed to build a four-story structure that could accommodate at least 300 athletes, which is about the same number of athletes now crowding the north and south towers of the stadium and the spaces on the rim of the oval.

"The idea came to my mind even during my days as a national swimmer," said Buhain, who led uprisings against PSC in 1993 demanding for – among other things – a decent place for national athletes to stay. "I think they (NHA and Pagcor officials) also took pity on the athletes housing state.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1992, Cora Thomas and Jun Orbon notched 2074 and 2338 pins, respectively, to rule the associate masters title of the Tenpin Bowling Association of Parañaque at the Green Valley. Also today in 1993, Rikki DyLiacco timed 1:03.36 to win the first leg of the Shell Helix Slalom Runoff at the Folk Arts Theater parking lot.

UCLA ousts No. 1 Cincinatti; Texas prevails

NEW YORK — Never count out UCLA in college basketball's NCAA tournament.

A hot-and-cold regular season or so-so seeding don't seem to mean a thing to the Bruins in March, and Sunday they reached the round of 16 by knocking off Cincinnati, the West Regional's No. 1.

Playing with the sense of purpose that 11 previous UCLA teams displayed en route to national titles, the No. 8-seeded Bruins weathered two thrilling overtimes to upset the Bearcats 105-101.

"We've been up and down all season," said UCLA forward Matt Barnes, who scored all 17 of his points after halftime and had 11 assists. "Especially with the high expectations we've had. But we usually get hot at tourney time."

The Bearcats never before had a top seeding in the NCAAs and became the first No. 1 team sent home this year.

UCLA heads to the round of 16 for the fifth time in six years, and its next opponent is 12th-seeded Missouri.

The Bruins were led Sunday by Dan Gadzuric's career-high 26 points, while Jason Kapono scored 19, 17 after halftime.

"That's as talented an eight seed as there's ever been in the history of the tournament," Cincinnati coach Bob Huggins said. "They're terrific."

In a smaller-scale surprise, sixth-seeded Texas let a 23-point lead shrink all the way to two before beating No. 3 Mississippi State 68-64 in the Midwest Regional. Texas next faces the region's No. 2 team, Oregon.

Also in the Midwest, fourth-seeded Illinois topped Creighton 72-60, with Frank Williams scoring 20, all in the second half. The Illini move on to a matchup against No. 1 Kansas in the final 16.

In the East, Connecticut got past North Carolina State 77-74 behind Caron Butler's 34 points and nine rebounds.

And in the South's lone game Sunday, third-seeded Pittsburgh held California scoreless for about 10 minutes and won 63-50. The Panthers will play 10th-seeded Kent State in the third round.

West At Pittsburgh UCLA 105, Cincinnati 101, 2OT

UCLA (21-11) trailed by 13 in the first half, rallied from an 11-point hole in the second, and then outscored Cincinnati (31-3) 15-11 in the second overtime. It's the first time since 1986 that one NCAA tournament had two games go to two OTs.

AP

Kings extend Raptors' woes; Lakers triumph

TORONTO —Chris Webber had 31 points and 15 rebounds, and Mike Bibby scored 18 of his 22 points in the second half to lead the Sacramento Kings to a 116-113 victory Sunday over the hapless Toronto Raptors.

Vince Carter, who finished with 22 points, fouled out with 3:07 remaining for the Raptors, who have lost 16 of their last 17 games. Toronto also has lost nine straight at home.

Doug Christie added 18 points for the Kings, including a three-point play that gave Sacramento a 113-109 lead with 25.3 seconds left. After Toronto's Morris Peterson missed badly on 3-point attempt, Webber made two free throws with 20.7 seconds remaining.

Lakers 105, Mavericks 103

In Los Angeles, Shaquille O'Neal had 28 points and nine rebounds, and Robert Horry made two 3-pointers in the final three minutes as the Los Angeles Lakers beat Dallas.

Horry had 19 points and eight rebounds; Rick Fox and Derek Fisher scored 16 each, and Kobe Bryant had 14 points, nine rebounds and 11 assists for the Lakers.

Michael Finley led the Mavericks with 21 points, but missed a 3-pointer at the buzzer that would have given his team the victory.

Steve Nash and Nick Van Exel added 20 points each, and Dirk Nowitzki had 17 points and 10 rebounds for the Mavericks.

Complete results

Orlando 105, Philadelphia 103; Indiana 85, Atlanta 68; New Jersey 87, Memphis 76; Sacramento 116, Toronto 113; Utah 96, Minnesota 89; Cleveland 104, New York 99; L.A. Lakers 105, Dallas 103.

AP

Tight race for best record

NBA NOTES

Henry Liao

THIS late into the season, with four weeks and 15-19 games remaining for all teams, the race for the best record in the Western Conference—or the entire NBA for that matter—is as tight as it can be.

Only two games separate the team (actually teams) with the league's best record from the fourth-placer and all reside in the deep, deep West, the eventual winner of which is likely to be the de facto NBA champion.

Entering today's games (Manila time), the two-time reigning NBA titlist LA Lakers and their closest Pacific Division pursuers, the Sacramento Kings, jointly hold the top mark in the league at 46.18.

Today, the Kings, who'll probably be playing again without top scorer and rebounder Chris Webber who has a dislocated right index finger, will travel to Toronto to face the slumping Toronto Raptors, losers of 15 of their last 16 assignments. Sacramento owns the best home record in the majors at 30-3 but away from the Arco Arena, the club is only 16-15.

The Lakers, on the other hand, will host the dangerous and retooled Dallas Mavericks who, at 46-19, have the third-best overall card. The Lakers (21-11) and Mavericks (21-10) are among the NBA's three toughest teams on the road, the other being the San Antonio Spurs, who behind All-Star forward Tim Duncan are 20-12 on the road and own a 45-21 overall record and a nine-game winning streak going into their home encounter with the Lakers on March 21 (Manila time). LA is 2-0 against SA this campaign. They play the finale of their four-game head-to-head series on April 1 at the staples Center.

The Lakers and Kings have split the first two games of their four-game season series thus far, with each team winning once at home. The two teams will meet again in Sacramento on March 25 (Manila time) and April 18 in Los Angeles.

The Lakers also are 2-0 versus Dallas in their head-to-head confrontation. They actually play back-to-back games against the Mavericks today and Wednesday (Manila time), the latter of Dallas' home floor.

It's a busy week for the Lakers this week as they face Dallas twice, and San Antonio, Central Division-leading Detroit (at home on March 23) and Sacramento once.

A year ago, the Spurs emerged with the highest winning percentage during the regular wars with a 58-24 record. The Lakers captured their final eight regular games to edge out Sacramento (55-27) for the Pacific crown and tie east topnotcher Philadelphia for the No. 2 mark at 56-26. Behind two-time NBA Finals MVP Shaquille O'Neal and do-it-all guard Kobe Bryant, LA made a successful title defense by registering an unprecedented 15-1 record in the playoffs, including a 4-1 shellacking of the 76ers in the championship round.

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Tiger makes history in Bay Hill tourney

WOODS pumps his fist after sinking the winning putt.

ORLANDO, Florida—Tiger Woods became the first player to win three different U.S. PGA Tour events three years in succession when he claimed a four-stroke victory at the $4 million Bay Hill Invitational on Sunday.

The world number one fired a closing three-under-par 69 to finish 13-under on 275, four shots clear of New Zealander Michael Campbell (71). Phil Mickelson, Rocco Mediate, John Huston and Len Mattiace shared third place on 280.

Woods, 26, who lives in Orlando, won the Memorial and WGC-NEC Invitational three times each between 1999 and 2001, and has now lifted the Bay Hill title in 2000, 2001 and 2002.

"It's a great feeling," Woods said. "There's no doubt about it. To come out here and play, hit this golf course under three different conditions. Actually, they were three totally different scenarios how I won this tournament."

The win was his 30th on the U.S. PGA Tour, making him the youngest ever to reach that milestone. The victory was also Woods's first since last August's WGC-NEC Invitational.

Woods once again showed how good he is at front running, winning for the 22nd time in 24 attempts after holding or sharing the 54-hole lead.

He jump-started his round with a par-saving putt at the eighth hole before posting three birdies on the back nine.

"That putt on the eighth was the whole turnaround," Woods said. "I just dug down deep and focused on what I needed to do. I figured 11-under was going to win, so I thought if I could hang around, I would have a chance." *Reuters*

Mandaluyong plays host to 7-cock derby today

A BIG group of cockers from Palawan, Negros Occidental, Cebu and Iloilo challenges their Metro Manila counterparts in today's 7th Ucap/Firebird MB/ 7-Cock Derby at Mandaluyong Coliseum.

Sagupaan Super Feeds and Washout Shampoo are the event's sponsors.

Among those invited by the derby hosts, hotelier-sportsman Biboy Enriquez and Mauro Prieto of Palawan, are Gov. Joel Reyes, Baby Elebera of Palawan Cooperative, Edgar Dionela, Robert Sy, Jun Sunog, Chito Samesa, Tony Oppen, LGBA president Boy Diaz, 2002 World Slasher champion Dicky Lim, Gov. Ito Ynares, former Mayor Jessie Viceo, Gerry Fevidal, lawyer Capuccino, William Go, Iking Araneta and Peping Suarez, among others.

Sabong idol Patrick Antonio, current leader in the 2002 Ucap Cocker of the Year race, banners the tough Ucap contingent that include its president Butch Macaset, OPMI president Vic Yu, Mayor Gerry "Boy" Espina, Alan Tan, former ambassador Danding Cojuangco, Pete Rodriguez, Sonny Lagon, Esting Teopaco, Capt. Ben Rodriguez, Raymond Velayo, Otic Geroso, Jer Fernando, Mario Villamor, Tito Reyes, Blandy Tolentino, Pol Estrellado, Alex Tang, Nelson Co, Boyboy Roa, Rep. Claude Bautista, Ram Lopez, Rudy Salud, Lito Orillaza, Wacky Salud, Benjie Lim and others.

Last week's winner in the 6th Ucap 7-Cock Derby (43 entries) were Bobby Wong and Arnold Mendoza (What A Guy GF-BAN).

For inquiries, please contact 534-4110, 531-4003, 531-4005 and 535-2341.

Davao bet rules 4x4 meet

LANANG, Davao City—Local bet Tim Tom Gempesaw of host 4-Wheel Davao ruled the kickoff of the 2002 Caltex Delo 4x4 Extreme Challenge Series at the Damosa Estate here.

It was the third consecutive victory this year for the 31-year-old Gempesaw after clinching the titles in two earlier invitationals in Kalilangan, General Santos City and in the first Kamulan Off-Road Series in Malaybalay, Bukidnon last month.

He registered a total time of 8:35.11 in all three highly technical tracks, posting his fastest time of 1:52.56 to also emerge the Track B champion of this event presented by Caltex Delo and co-presented by Procter and Gamble Philippines.

Sonny Apparente of General Santos 4-Wheel Club bagged the runner-up honors as he clocked a total of 10:28.96 on all three tracks and likewise emerged the Track A champion with the fastest time of 1:17.83.

Toten Macmang of Cagayan de Oro finished third in 14:19.10, while Bobet Española of General Santos City and Bambi Bernales of Bukidnon wound up fourth and fifth, respectively, after clocking 14:57.86 and 15:37.93.

Caltex area manager of Southern Mindanao Lyle Sulit, events organizer Sonee Pili and host 4-Wheel Davao president Bryan Toh led the fun-filled awarding ceremonies.

Leongson, Saulog dominate 'moto'

PASSI City, Iloilo—Shell-Yamaha stalwarts Jovie Saulog and Ernie Leongson took advantage of Glenn Aguilar's absence in the final stretch to dominate the WG&A Super Ferry National Motocross Series 2002 before 40,000 Ilonggos—the biggest crowd ever gathered for a motocross event—over the weekend.

Saulog, a seven-time National Rider of the Year, ruled the Pro 125 category with 37 points to lead by seven his Shell-Yamaha teammate Leongson, who, on the other hand, topped the open category with 35 points.

Saulog admitted that the victory was somehow incomplete without his fiercest rival in Aguilar, who is nicknamed "The Rocket."

Aguilar, the Caltex-Revtex star rider who is shooting for an unprecedented eighth-straight national motocross title, was sidelined after a bad landing while he was trailing both Leongson and Saulog during the fourth lap of the Pro 125 race of the second heat.

Despite fracturing his collarbone, Aguilar still wanted to continue the race but was advised by Caltex-Revtex KTM team manager Ner Marquez Dormiendo to rest and stay out of the whole race, which is supported by WG&A, Bench and No Fear.

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ATHLETICS EQUIPMENT
Philippine Amateur Track and Field Association president Go Teng Kok (second from right) receives Nelco India track and field equipment from Nelco Industries president Adarsh Anand during a recent turnover ceremony. Also shown (from left) are Anil Buxani of Sonia Trading, the local distributor of Nelco, sports Commissioner Weena Lim, Sonia Trading president Kay Sham and sports commissioner Richie Garcia.

Teske subdues Sorenstam

PHOENIX — Rachel Teske birdied the second playoff hole to beat defending champion Annika Sorenstam in the Ping Banner Health on Sunday.

Sorenstam blew a four-shot lead in regulation. She started with a double bogey on the first hole and had bogeys on the last two, finishing at 4-over-par 76.

Teske carded a 71, tying Sorenstam at 7-under 281. *AP*

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NO REASON FOR HOARDING AND INCREASE IN CEMENT PRICES

The Philippine Cement Manufacturers Corporation (Philcemcor), the trade association of local cement manufacturers, is acting on reports of cement hoarding and price speculation in areas in Batangas and some parts of Metro Manila. It is reported that speculators have been artificially increasing prices.

There is absolutely no reason for this. The local cement manufacturers are operating in normal capacity, and cement manufacturers' prices have not changed.

Nonetheless, Philcemcor is now closely coordinating with the DTI and consumer groups to immediately arrest the situation, which could only be caused by unscrupulous parties out to take advantage of the situation of the local cement industry that is now asking definitive safeguards from government because of surges in cement imports.

To curb price speculation, the various cement companies are and will be publishing in national newspapers their suggested retail prices in Metro Manila and other key areas. Firms will also designate several "hotlines" where consumers can report overpricing.

Some manufacturers are also set to increase further their output and will soon inject more supplies to the market to thwart hoarding and profiteering. Shipments from cement companies in Visayas and Mindanao have begun arriving to insure strong cement supply to prevent hoarders from jacking up prices.

We urgently request our consumers and the public to immediately report hoarding and overpricing through Philcemcor's email address of plcemcor@info.com.ph, or its fax number of 6359772, or the telephone "hotlines" that will be announced in companies' ads, or directly to the Department of Trade and Industry at 8118367 or 8904932.

We wish to assure you again that the local cement industry is committed to stability in prices, the welfare of the consuming public, and to overall national interest. But we need the cooperation of the public, particularly our consumers, to put a stop to these illegal practices.

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MESSAGE

I welcome the International Marketing Group (IMG) to Philam Plans, Inc.'s growing alternative distribution channels.

The marketing tie-up between IMG and Philam Plans is a significant alliance in the pre-need industry. Our experience in the past indicates that so much could be achieved in terms of efficiency, productivity and profitability by such an alliance. Therefore, we found it imperative to make full use of this opportunity to nurture and develop IMG as one of Philam Plans, Inc.'s distribution arms.

In the long term, we see IMG distributing other products of the Philam Group of Companies that include life insurance, non-life insurance, personal lines, health care, mutual funds, banking services, credit cards, etc. for the benefit of a greater number of Filipinos in the Philippines.

We hope that IMG, Philam Plans and the Philam Group of Companies would equitably profit from this business relationship.

Best wishes and good luck!

JOSE L. CUISIA, JR.
Chairman of the Board

MESSAGE

I am glad to welcome the International Marketing Group (IMG) as partner to Philam Plans, Inc. in promoting the concept of financial preparedness through pre-need plans.

IMG and Philam Plans share one thing in common. Both are in the business of making the people's dreams come true -- financial stability, children's education, comfortable retirement, long-term savings, security, etc.

Philam Plans will provide IMG with the best pre-need products for its clients. The tie-up with Philam Plans will enable IMG to practically carry all products of the Philam Group of Companies. With the Philam Group of Companies as product providers, IMG can offer its clients a wide array of financial investments and insurance opportunities, creating wealth not only for the clients but also for IMG sales associates themselves.

I am certain this partnership will bring success to both IMG and Philam Plans and benefit a greater number of Filipinos. I therefore welcome IMG to our fold.

All the best!

ELISEO P. DIZON, JR.
President & Chief Executive Officer

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THE TIES THAT BIND. Philam Plans, Inc., the country's leading pre-need company teams up with the International Marketing Group, a new player in the sales arena, to bring pre-need products closer to the Filipino people. Signing a Memorandum of Agreement are (from left): Gil Pestaño, VP-Alternative Distribution, Joen Delas Peñas, Marketing Director, Atty. Eliseo P. Dizon, Jr., President & CEO, Luie DyBuncio, Marketing Head-Philam Plans. (Standing): Bart Borja, Marketing Director; Cathy Borja, Marketing Director, Vanjee Villanueva, Marketing Director and Noel Arandilla, Marketing Director.

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Malonzo now wants LRT station moved /A22
QC policeman arrested for Marikina slay /A22

METRO
Editor Louie C. Camino

On Target: The most abusive cop in my book /A22

'Secret dump' contract extended

Group warns of 'garbage mafia'

By Christian V. Esguerra and Alcuin Papa

AS CIVIC groups hit the deal the government struck with the garbage firm Jancom, the Taguig municipal council yesterday extended the contract of another garbage firm allegedly operating a "secret dumpsite" near Laguna Lake.

Majority of the Taguig councilors managed to fend off issues raised by the minority bloc and voted in favor of extending the contract of IPM Construction and Development Corp. until June, according to Councilor Noel Dizon, assistant minority floor leader.

The council, which is set to sign next week the resolution on the contract extension, even jacked up the monthly fee for IPM's services from P4.4 million to around P4.6 million, Dizon said.

"I don't know why the contract was ratified despite all the complaints," he told the INQUIRER yesterday.

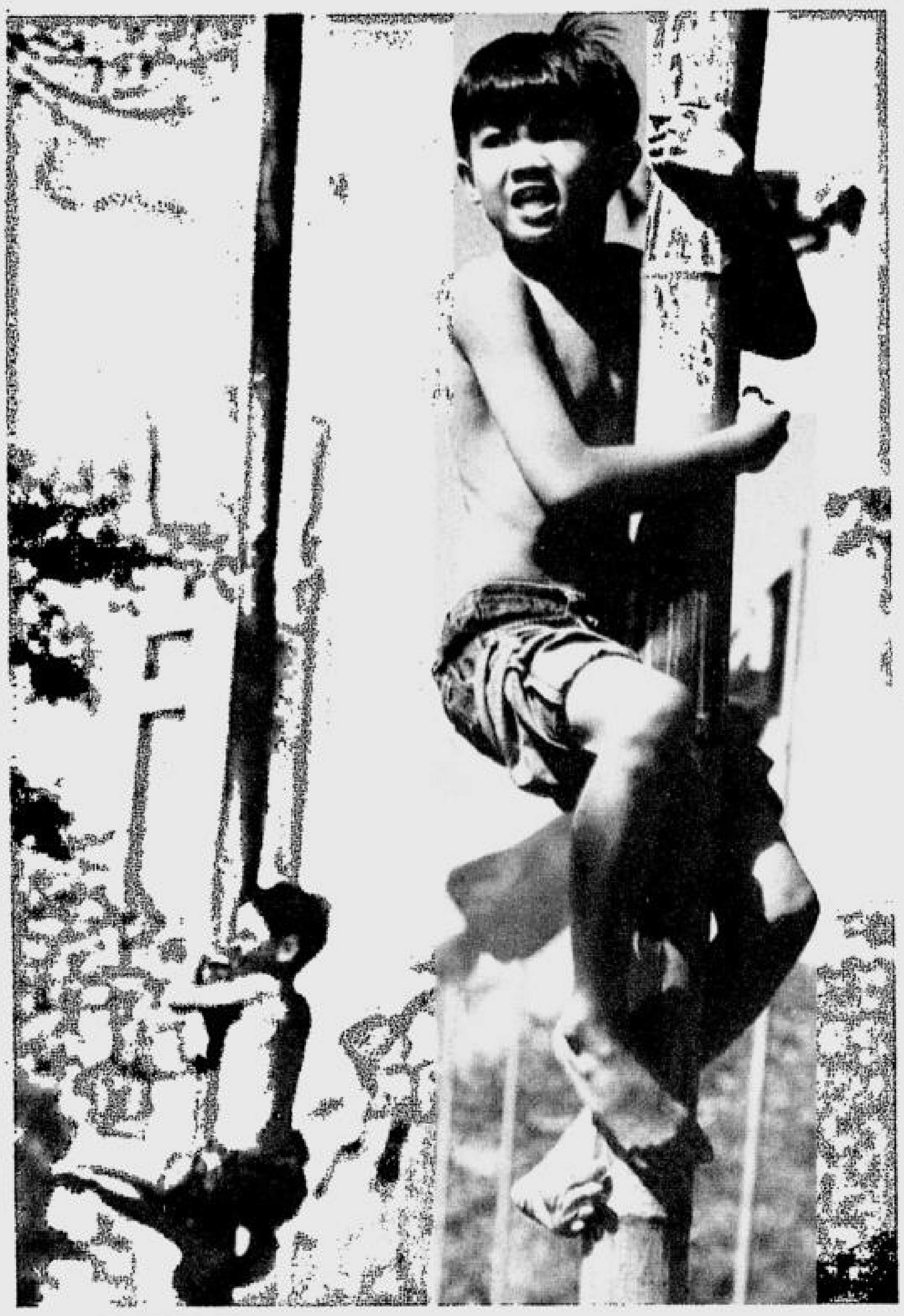
The councilor said the majority, before extending the contract, should have waited for the results of the two parallel investigations of the contractor's alleged illegal activities.

The Metro Manila Development Authority and the Taguig municipal government are investigating IPM Construction over complaints that the firm has been operating a "secret dumpsite" in Sitio Arienda in Taytay, Rizal since the middle of last year.

But the firm earlier claimed that it was using a legitimate dumpsite in Montalban, Rizal, according to Dizon.

The councilor said he and other members of the minority bloc later discovered that IPM was illegally dumping trash near the Laguna Lake in

'SECRET DUMP'/ A22



RACE TO THE TOP
One of the rites of summer is the "palosebo," often played during town fiestas, where boys race each other in clambering up greased poles to grab a jackpot waiting at the top. The "Larong Pinoy Pampamilya" holds its own version at the Quezon Memorial Circle in Quezon City. DENNIS SABANGAN

Ex-mayor wants Alma

By Christian V. Esguerra and Leah Salterio

ACTRESS Alma Moreno might take on a new role in Parañaque politics—that of "lucky charm" of former mayor Pablo Olivarez, arch rival of incumbent Parañaque Mayor Joey Marquez, her estranged husband.

Olivarez yesterday said he is planning to invite Moreno to run as vice mayor under his ticket in 2004.

"I think she could be my lucky charm," Olivarez told the INQUIRER yesterday.

Olivarez, who was defeated three consecutive times in the mayoral race by Marquez, said he was "100-percent sure" of running again for the post, which he occupied from 1992 to 1995.

MORENO

Marquez, who is on his third and final term as mayor, was Olivarez's vice mayor.

Moreno could greatly help his candidacy considering that she was the "right-hand man" of Marquez during his successful campaigns, according to Olivarez.

"She will be a strong candidate for vice mayor," he said.

Moreno had accused Olivarez of re-

EX-MAYOR/ A22

From danger zone to freeway

By Armand N. Nocum

A PUBLIC works official has proposed turning the long stretch of Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City into a freeway, where no people can cross, to reduce the average of 3,000 vehicular accidents that happen there each year.

DPWH National Capital Region Director Antonio Sta. Elena said the busy, eight-lane highway is one of the most dangerous highways in Metro Manila.

"It should be considered a freeway similar to the South and North Luzon expressways," Sta. Elena told the Inquirer in a telephone interview.

He said he was concerned about a report from the Central Police District traffic office

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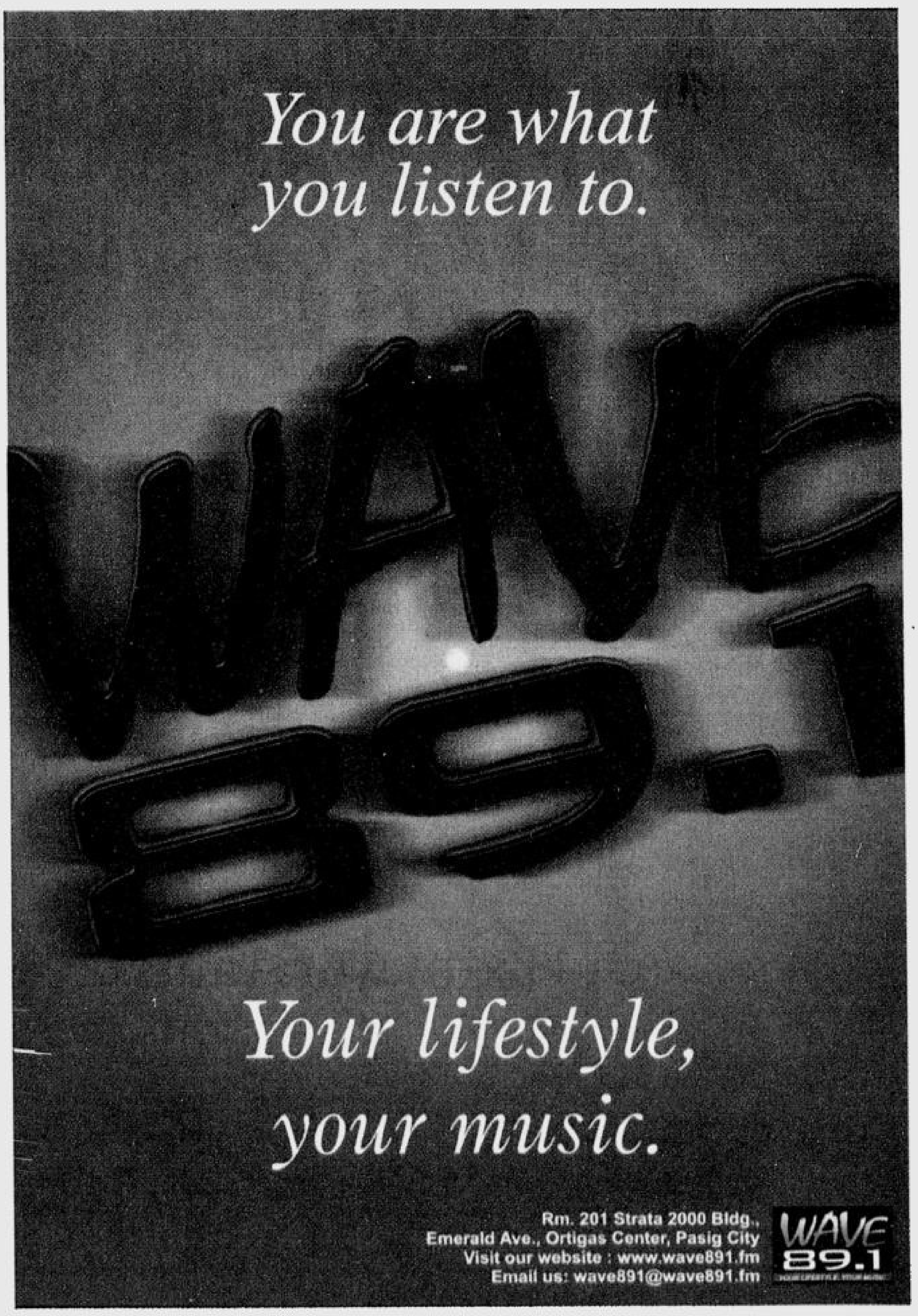

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The most abusive cop in my book

ON TARGET
Ramon Tulfo

I'VE met many abusive policemen since I first covered the police beat in the late 1970s. Different cops have different abusive acts in different degrees.

In terms of degree of being abusive, I think nobody can beat Chief Insp. Miguelito Descalzo, deputy commander of the anti-kidnapping Task Force Calabarzon in Southern Tagalog.

This *sanababits* has been harassing Rev. Albert Malaza and his family for no other reason than his Pentecostal church gets in the way of the cop's tricycle business. Descalzo does not believe in freedom of worship that is enshrined in the Constitution.

* * *

Malaza came to me on my "Isumbong Mo Kay Tulfo" radio-TV public service program last month to seek my help in stopping Descalzo's harassment.

The policeman, said the Protestant pastor, had ordered some thugs to stone his house that also serves as a place of worship to his small congregation. In some of the stoning incidents, Reverend Malaza said, he saw Descalzo at the head of the rock hurlers.

The police major is angry at Malaza because he fenced an area that used to serve as terminal for Descalzo's tricycles. The pastor erected the fence so his church could have space for the faithful. The fenced area is part of the lot where Malaza's house-cum-church is built.

* * *

I brought the complaint to Chief Supt. Domingo Reyes, director of PNP Recom 4, Descalzo's boss. I thought Descalzo's harassment of the Malazas would end there. I was wrong.

The cop's harassment of the Malazas escalated.

Several days after "Isumbong" brought the complaint before Descalzo's boss, the Malazas found the chickens they were raising all beheaded. Even the chicks were not spared.

* * *

One day while Malaza and his son were riding a tricycle, Descalzo cut through their path, got down from his car and told the pastor: "*Malapit ka na, bata!*" He then made a motion of cutting his throat and pointed at the pastor.

At another time, the police major threatened to slap Malaza's 11-year-old son who happened to look in his direction. "*Anong tinitingnan mo, gusto mo bang sampalin kita?*" the cop allegedly told the boy.

I feel that since I brought the complaint against Descalzo to General Reyes, his continued harassment of the Malazas was meant to send a message to me.

* * *

I am not in the habit of hurling a challenge in this corner, but I am taking an exception this time: Why doesn't Descalzo do to me what he's been doing to the Malazas?

You know what I think of you, Descalzo? You're a stinking coward because you only pick on people who can't fight back.

In your youth, somebody probably beat you up and you wet your pants out of fear. Now that you have a badge and a gun, you bully the weak since they won't fight back.

Yellow, that's what you are. I wish you knew what that word implies because you're probably too stupid to know.

* * *

Why should government troops notify the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) that they're operating in certain areas in Basilan?

That means that the government recognizes that some parts of the archipelago are held by the MILF.

That gives the MILF the status of belligerency.

Has the government given up some parts of the Philippines to the Moro rebels?

* * *

Somebody lobbed a grenade at the residential compound of my friend, Zamboanga City businessman Lepeng Wee last week. Nobody was hurt in the explosion, apparently meant to scare him and his family.

Police suspect extortion as the motive for the grenade attack. Wee had received a letter purportedly coming from the notorious Abu Sayyaf demanding P500,000 from him.

But the businessman doesn't believe the Abu Sayyaf was behind the attack.

* * *

"Mon, that bandit group has never bothered me because it knows I will never come across," Wee said. "I am a friend of the Muslims because I give many of them livelihood through my business."

Wee is the country's No. 1 exporter of carageenan, a food product that comes from seaweeds. He buys dried seaweeds from Muslims in Basilan and Tawi-Tawi.

Wee said Muslims love him because he gives many of them livelihood. If the businessman does, so will their livelihood.

* * *

The city is abuzz with rumor that a woman government official masterminded the attack on Wee's house.

The official and the businessman have a tiff because she suspects he tried to smuggle into the Zamboanga port some toxic chemicals. Wee has consistently denied the accusation.

The quarrel between Wee and the official, who used to be very good friends before she was assigned in Zamboanga City, became worse when she allegedly sided with Wee's political enemy, the Lobregats.

* * *

Rumors in that small city say that the woman official, who reportedly has a military officer for her consort, was overheard to have said Wee would regret having crossed her. The official carries a gun and doesn't hide it.

According to Wee, many of his friends fear for him. Some of them, he said, were waiting for him to give them the go-signal to get even.

"But I won't tarnish my hands, Mon," the businessman said. "I will just leave it to the authorities to do the revenge for me."

Malonzo now wants LRT station moved

CALOOCAN City Mayor Reynaldo O. Malonzo wants the LRT station in Monumento to be moved at least 90 meters away from the foot of the Bonifacio monument.

"It's too close to the monument, it obstructs the view from Rizal Avenue," Malonzo said in a statement.

Had he been a local official when the LRT was built, Malonzo said he would not have allowed the LRT to end just a few meters away from the foot of the monument.

He said that if the LRT station were moved back at least on 10th Avenue, the traffic in Monumento area would be decongested.

Activities in the area will be decentralized and the view to the monument will be unobstructed just like when it was first built in its present site, Malonzo said.

The mayor said he is also contemplating on revoking the building permits of the structures around the Monumento area to give way to an urban renewal. He also called on the House of Representatives and the Senate, particularly Senator Blas Ople, to pass a law first declaring the Bonifacio Monument as a national historical landmark after the National Historical Institute expressed quandary on whether the obelisk is historical or not.

MALONZO

In a letter sent to Malonzo, Dr. Pablo S. Trillana III, officer in charge, Office of the NHI Chairman and Executive Director, said the NHI has convened a panel of experts from the fields of history, conservation and planning, who will determine if the Bonifacio Monument should be declared a national historical landmark.

Malonzo also asked the city council to enact an ordinance that will lead to the declaration of the Bonifacio Monument as national historical landmark.

"Everyone seems to dip their fingers in this issue, but no one has yet suggested a possible solution (on proposed) transfer of the monument," Malonzo said in his statement.

He said he is calling on those opposing his proposed transfer of the monument to help him find a way to make the monument a national historical landmark.

Malonzo was particularly irked by the statements of the group Kaanak 1896 who said in a published report that transferring the Bonifacio Monument in Tala in northern Caloocan is tantamount to throwing the obelisk in a trash can.

He said that the group must first see the developments he has made in Tala before saying anything. He said he was also offended by the statement of Tina Testa, Kaanak 1896 spokesperson, who said that if the proposed move would push through, "the general public would not get to see the monument anymore except, perhaps the lepers and squatters."

"I am sure that their relatives who fought in the war are now turning up in their graves for their irresponsible statements," Malonzo said.

Tala estate is home to more than a million mostly urban poor residents of Caloocan. The Tala Leprosarium was established there years ago.

"But what is wrong with that? Our people in the area are also Filipinos who love Bonifacio as much as you do and maybe more because they can relate with him being poor but kind enough not to look upon others with ridicule," Malonzo said.

Tala residents also said Kaanak 1896 has no right to look down on them.

QC policeman arrested in Marikina slay

By Nelson F. Flores

MARIKINA City lawmen arrested a Quezon City policeman Saturday night in connection with the killing of a woman who was found naked under a dimly lighted bridge in Marikina five days ago.

PO1 Elmer Buena, 33, of the Central Police District Office and presently assigned to the Baler Police Station in Quezon City, was taken in custody after he was tagged as a suspect in the killing of Maria Morena, of Highway Hills, Mandaluyong City.

Buena was arrested at the Marikina City police station when he tried to collect Morena's body.

Homicide investigator SPO1 Virgilio Cayetano of the Marikina City police said Buena was identified by Morena's cousin, Vivian Pagtalon, 32, as the man who wanted Morena dead.

Pagtalon told police that she talked to Morena on March 13, a day before the latter was found dead and naked under the Marcos Highway Bridge.

Pagtalon claimed Morena was set to meet with Buena last Tuesday to settle their dispute over her complaint against him before the Philippine National Police Internal Affairs Office.

Pagtalon claimed Buena told Morena to keep their meeting secret.

Pagtalon also told investigators that Morena feared for her life. Pagtalon claimed that Morena told her that if anything happened to her, it would be Buena's doing.

The witness added that when she heard over the radio that the body of a naked woman was found in Marikina the following day, she was immediately convinced it was Morena, and that Buena had killed her.

Records showed Morena was shot twice in the head with a 9-mm. pistol. Her clothing was scattered beside her body.

Buena denied any involvement and refused to cooperate in the investigation.

From danger ...

From page A21

which showed that last year, 3,792 vehicular accidents were recorded on Commonwealth Avenue.

Police records indicate that from February to January this year alone, 529 accidents occurred in the area, mostly caused by people crossing the unlighted highway.

Sta. Elena proposed the construction of more overpass structures and service roads for jeepneys to address the traffic problem. But he said the immediate concern would be to put up a steel fence along the center of the road to discourage people from crossing.

"The freeway should be free of obstructions," he said.

Oscar Cammayo, head of the Quezon City subdistrict engineering office of the DPWH, said they are rushing work on a new overpass leading to a public market inaugurated by President Macapagal-Arroyo along Commonwealth Avenue last Friday.

He said the P10-million pedestrian overpass would enable commuters to safely cross the expanded highway toward the newly constructed National Government Center market.

WANTED: PLAYGROUND

Without a proper playground, these children, using their imagination plus sacks and rope, make do with a trailer's skeleton along Road 10 in Tondo, Manila.

ERIK ARAZAS

'Secret dump' contract . . .

From page A21

Napindan, Taguig.

"We have video footage and other evidence that would prove IPM has been illegally using a dumpsite in Napindan," he said.

Residents there fear that toxic residues from the reported dump might seep into the Laguna Lake and create serious environmental and health problems, according to Dizon.

Yesterday, another civic group hit the Jancom company, describing it as a "garbage mafia," and denounced the deal it struck with government.

Dr. Metodio Palaypay, president of the Zero Waste Recycling Movement of the Philippines, said if Jancom's deal with the government would be implemented, "nobody else can touch the garbage" of Metro Manila, and efforts to promote recycling would go down the drain.

"If that is the case, no one else can test the quality of their work," Palaypay told reporters yesterday.

He said the deal would favor local government officials because of the trucking fees they would collect.

"We will spend so much in tipping fees," he said. "That contract has a lot of hidden clauses."

One of the hidden clauses is the stipulation that Jancom can only collect garbage that has a moisture content of 20 percent.

But according to Palaypay, Metro Manila residents produce garbage with moisture content of 60 percent.

"Among other fees, the company will charge us for reducing this moisture content," he said. "Do we want our children and our children's children to be saddled with all of this?"

Palaypay blasted the Supreme Court's Third Division for upholding Jancom's contract with the government in January. "It is an onerous comedy of errors and a form of judicial legislation gone wrong."

In January, the high court's Third Division ruled that the 1997 garbage deal between the government and Jancom was "valid and perfected" as long as the President signed it.

Civic and environment groups have expressed opposition to the deal, saying it will defraud the government of P390 billion. Aside from that, the deal will violate the ban on the use of incinerators, the groups said.

The MMDA has asked the Supreme Court to rule on the matter en banc to settle the matter.

Ex-mayor wants . . .

From page A21

sorting to cheap propaganda during the 1995 campaign, blaming him to be the source of a news report that said Marquez had "died in an ambush" and Moreno was in critical condition.

Moreno herself is said to be planning to run for mayor in 2004. But she has not confirmed if she would soon wade into the political fray. Since her separation from Marquez, talk about her candidacy stopped.

Earlier speculation that Olivarez had been befriending Moreno so she would agree to be his running mate is expected to escalate after Olivarez made his announcement yesterday.

Olivarez said this speculation could have come from his political opponents, who are "jealous" of his budding links with Moreno.

On Wednesday, Olivarez watched Moreno in her show at Comic Lab in Malate, but he claimed he never got to talk to her beyond a mere exchange of pleasantries. He said he watched the show with his friends from the local political circle.

Moreno said she sold Olivarez tickets to her show when he went to her mother's wake last month.

Olivarez said he bought 20 tickets from Moreno, each worth P350.

In January, Moreno and Marquez announced their separation after 12 years of marriage. Moreno has since moved out of the family house in Tahanan Village, Parañaque and is now renting a house in Ayala Alabang.

The couple has three children — Yeoj, Win-Win, VJ —and an adopted daughter, Em-Em.

2 more fires consume P5M in Manila

By Philip C. Tubeza

TWO more fires hit Manila yesterday, gutting more than P5 million in property, according to fire officials.

Fire struck the Concepcion building on Lerma Street in Sampaloc, and the Ermita Centre Building on Roxas Boulevard, said arson investigator FO2 Oscar Ropero of the Manila fire department.

Four people were injured in the three-story Concepcion building, beside the Far Eastern University, Ropero said.

He identified the injured as building tenant Jaime Alujado, fireman SFO1 Renato Badista, Miles Hilario and Sandy Briones.

Alujado, 54, suffered third-degree burns in both palms, while fireman Badista was hit by falling glass, Ropero said.

Ropero said the fire began at 10:26 a.m. and spread to the mezzanine of the building, which belonged to businessman Jaime Concepcion. The flames quickly spread to the building's other floors.

The blaze reached the fifth alarm before it was put out at 11:29 a.m.

Several hours before the Lerma fire, a 30-minute blaze hit the Ermita Centre Building, which destroyed P10,000 worth of property, Ropero said.

The fire began in a security agency's office, at 12:18 a.m. and was put out at 12:47 a.m.

Dad wants laser pointers banned in moviehouses

ARE you among those who are annoyed by laser penlights and laser pointers in moviehouses, theaters and auditoriums?

A Manila councilor has filed a proposed ordinance prohibiting these gadgets in public places where shows, speeches, or seminars are being held.

Councilor Luciano "Lou" Veloso of the city's sixth district said the ban would "instill discipline and maintain peace and order during public gatherings."

His bill also restricts the use of mobile phones, pagers, mini-radios and other electronic devices in public places.

He said speakers and participants in public gatherings should be accorded due respect and not be distracted by the irritating beams of red light which some people in the audience point at the stage, screen or even the speaker.

The laser pens also pose danger in political and sensitive gathering since it is similar to the laser sights mounted on guns and rifles, according to Veloso. He said this could trigger panic and commotion, particularly among security personnel.

If his proposal is approved, violators would be fined P500 to P1,000 and their gadgets would be confiscated. *Jerome Aning*

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8	WE WERE SOLDIERS
9	CLOSED
10	CLOSED
11	CLOSED
12	CLOSED

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4	D-TOX
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10	BIBINGKA

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2	CLOSED
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6	GOT 2 BELIEVE

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3	WE WERE SOLDIERS

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4	EVA

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6	13 GHOSTS

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1 (DTS)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3	EVA
4	GOT 2 BELIEVE
5 (SDDS)	D-TOX
6	BIBINGKA
7 (DOLBY)	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
8	ESKANDALOSA

Gotesco Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1	RESERVE
2	WE WERE SOLDIERS
3 (DTS)	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
4	BIBINGKA
5 (SDDS)	D-TOX

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	BIBINGKA

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	BIBINGKA

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson	EVA
Lords	EVA
Jennet	RESERVE

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3	EVA

Prima
(Pasig) tel 641.1215

3	RESERVE

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
2	WE WERE SOLDIERS
3	EVA
4	GOT 2 BELIEVE
5	BIBINGKA

New Divisoria Mall DIVISORIA CINEMA
tel 244.4619

1	RESERVE
2	RESERVE
3	RESERVE
4	RESERVE
5	RESERVE
6	RESERVE

FRC Cinema
Talaba Bacoor Cavite

1	ACCIDENTAL SPY
2	

Berma
tel 879.2029

1	EVA
2	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269

1	RESERVE
2	RESERVE

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna) tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198

1	ESKANDALOSA
2	WE WERE SOLDIERS
3 (DTS)	D-TOX

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	GOT 2 BELIEVE
2 (DTS)	LORD OF THE RINGS
3 (DOLBY)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
4	D-TOX

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1	GOT 2 BELIEVE
2 (DOLBY)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
3 (DTS)	D-TOX
4	LORD OF THE RINGS

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3	SOON TO OPEN
4	SOON TO OPEN

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
(Tarlac) tel(045) 982.1729

1	GOT 2 BELIEVE
2	ALI
3 (DOLBY)	SHALLOW HAL
4 (DTS)	RIDING IN CAR

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	ACCIDENTAL SPY
2	BIBINGKA
3	EVA
4 (DTS)	EARTHQUAKE

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 (DTS)	D-TOX
4	ESKANDALOSA
5	LORD OF THE RINGS

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	D-TOX
2	WE WERE SOLDIERS
3	ESKANDALOSA

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249-2558

1	D-TOX
2	WE WERE SOLDIERS
3	ESKANDALOSA

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311

1	VANILLA SKY
2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3	HINOG SA PILIT

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

1	THE OTHERS
2	WE WERE SOLDIERS
3	RESERVE

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	RESERVE
2 (DTS)	ESKANDALOSA

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385

1	RESERVE

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	ESKANDALOSA
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	RAT RACE
2	13 GHOSTS
3	MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
4	ESKANDALOSA

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 (DTS)	ALI
4	13 GHOSTS

***Movies are subject to change without prior notice**

ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

THX
CMG INTERNATIONAL

PREMIERE CINEMA THX
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THE MOTHER OF ALL VAMPIRES
QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
ALL SHE WANTS IS HELL ON EARTH

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@ Robinsons Malls

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633- 7641 loc. 279

1 THX	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
2	SHALLOW HAL
3	D-TOX
4	BEAUTIFUL MIND
5	WE WERE SOLDIERS
6	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
7	ROYAL TENENBAUMS
8	GOT 2 BELIEVE
9	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
10	THE SHIPPING NEWS

Ermita
536 -7809- 12

1	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
2	THE SHIPPING NEWS
3	D-TOX
4	GOT 2 BELIEVE
5	ROYAL TENENBAUMS
6	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
7	WE WERE SOLDIERS

Metro East -
Marcos hway 682- 8193 / 8280

1	D-TOX
2	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
3	SHIPPING NEWS
4	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
5	WE WERE SOLDIERS
6	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
7	GOT 2 BELIEVE
8	SHALLOW HAL

Novaliches
935- 3229 - 30

1	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
2	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
3	BEAUTIFUL MIND
4	GOT 2 BELIEVE
5	D-TOX
6	WE WERE SOLDIERS
7	THE SHIPPING NEWS
8	EVA, LASON KAY ADAN

Imus
471- 8188 / 875- 3838

1	WE WERE SOLDIERS
2	BIBINGKA
3	D-TOX
4	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
5	EVA, LASON KAY ADAN
6	GOT 2 BELIEVE

Bacolod
441- 0453 / 0459

1	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
2	SHALLOW HAL
3	GOT 2 BELIEVE
4	13 GHOSTS
5	MARSHALL DICK
6	MOTHMAN PROPHECIES

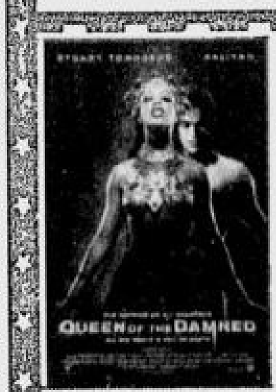
Iloilo
336- 8077 - 78

1	13 GHOSTS
2	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
3	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
4	MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
5	ESKANDALOSA
6	ALI

Star Mills-
Sn. Fernando, Pamp. 875- 1927
961-5318 / 5270

1	ESKANDALOSA
2	ALI
3	WE WERE SOLDIERS
4	IKAW LAMANG
5	13 GHOSTS
6	13 GHOSTS

malabon citisquare-
soon to open



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MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

Alpha Records releases 'Everlating Hits' album

JAY B. New Alpha Records artist.

ALPHA Records comes out with "Everlasting Hits . . . Unforgettable Love Moments," a collection of 17 all-time hits.

The line-up starts with "Emotion" by Samantha Sang, followed by other favorites like "Cherish" by Kool and the Gang, "Casablanca" by Bertie Higgins, "Just When I Needed You Most" by Randy Vanwarmer, "Because I Love You" by Shakin Stevens.

Also included in the collection is Dan Hill's "Sometimes When We Touch."

Four bonus tracks complete the album—"Angel Queen" by Dara Sedaka, "I've Never Been To Me" by Charlene, "It Might Be You" by Stephen Bishop and "The Temple of King" by Rainbow.

Each song in the "Everlasting Hits" collection is sure to strike an old, familiar chord.

'Love Songs'

NEW singing artist Jay B releases the album, "Awit ng Pag-ibig," distributed by Ivory Records.

The 11-track album features "Larawan," the carrier single penned by Jay B himself.

Other original tracks are "Fantasy," "Alone," "Lamp of Your path," "Patawad," "I'll Be There," "Give Love a Chance" and the title track "Awit ng Pag-ibig," the Tagalog adaptation of the popular Everly Brothers hit, "Unchained Melody."

Bonus tracks in the album are the minus one version of "Larawan," "Patawad" and "Awit ng Pag-ibig."

Jay B, a bachelor from Ilocandia, is endowed with a well-built physique, captivating looks and gifted with a voice that leaves listeners in awe.

RECORDS

THEATER
MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101	
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	GOT 2 BELIEVE IN MAGIC
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	EVA LASON KAY ADAN
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	QUEEN OF THE DAMMED
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	D - TOX
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	SHIPPING NEWS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7(DOLBY)	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
FARMERS PLAZA-1(DOLBY)	BIBINGKA
FARMERS PLAZA-2(DOLBY)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
FIESTA CARNIVAL	
NEW FRONTIER	
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	HUBOG / TOO MUCH FLESH
ODEON	WE WERE SOLDIERS
ODEON-2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
ROBEN	ESKANDALOSA
TANDEM-1	SEX MEDUSA
TANDEM-2	SEX EDUCATION
TIMES	OTHER SIDE OF LOVE / AMERICAN PIE 2
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	ORIGINAL SIN
QUEZON-1	ESKANDALOSA
REMAR	ESKANDALOSA
REMAR-2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	BIBINGKA
B	EVA LASON KAY ADAN
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
CINEMA-2	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
CINEMA-2	ESKANDALOSA
CINEMA-3	BIBINGKA
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
CINEMA-6	GOT 2 BELIEVE
CINEMA-7	EVA
CINEMA-8	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
CINEMA-11(SDDS)	D TOX
CINEMA-12	SHIPPING NEWS
CINEMA-14	GOT 2 BELIEVE
CINEMA-15	BEAUTIFUL MIND
LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	D-TOX
CINEMA-2	ROYAL TENENBAUMS
CINEMA-3	WE WERE SOLDIERS
CINEMA-4	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
CINEMA-5	SHIPPING NEWS
CINEMA-6	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
UNIWIDE METROMALL	
(LAS PINAS)	
CINEMA-1	
CINEMA-2	
CINEMA-4	
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
CINEMA-2	THE OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
CINEMA-4	ALAMID

POWER PLANT
CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND•EX

D-TOX - R 18 11:50, 1:45, 3:40, 5:35, 7:40, 9:45	ROYAL TENENBAUMS - P 13 12:00, 2:20, 4:40, 7:00, 9:30	WE WERE SOLDIERS - P 13 1:00, 4:00, 6:55, 9:50
QUEEN OF THE DAMNED - P 13 12:50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 9:50	SHIPPING NEWS - P 13 12:50, 3:10, 5:30, 7:50, 10:10	A BEAUTIFUL MIND - P13 11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00

Matinee, P80, Mon.-Fri.,11:00 am to 4:45 pm Screenings, Free Seating.

THEATRE MALL
GREENHILLS
a landmark reinvented!
DOLBY DIGITAL
NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 1	WE WERE SOLDIERS 12:30, 3:15, 6:00, 8:45 P 13
CINEMA 2	A BEAUTIFUL MIND 11:00, 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00 P 13

Matinee: P80.00 - Screenings before 5:00pm, Monday thru Friday (Free Seating).
Reserved Seating: P120.00 - After 5:00pm; Saturday, Sunday, Holidays.
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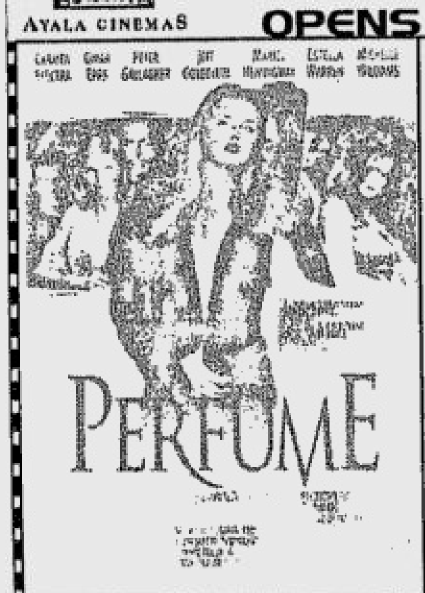


AYALA CINEMAS
ARTFILM - GREENBELT
Art Film
OPENS MARCH 20 (Wed.)

AN EXCLUSIVE PHILIPPINE PREMIERE

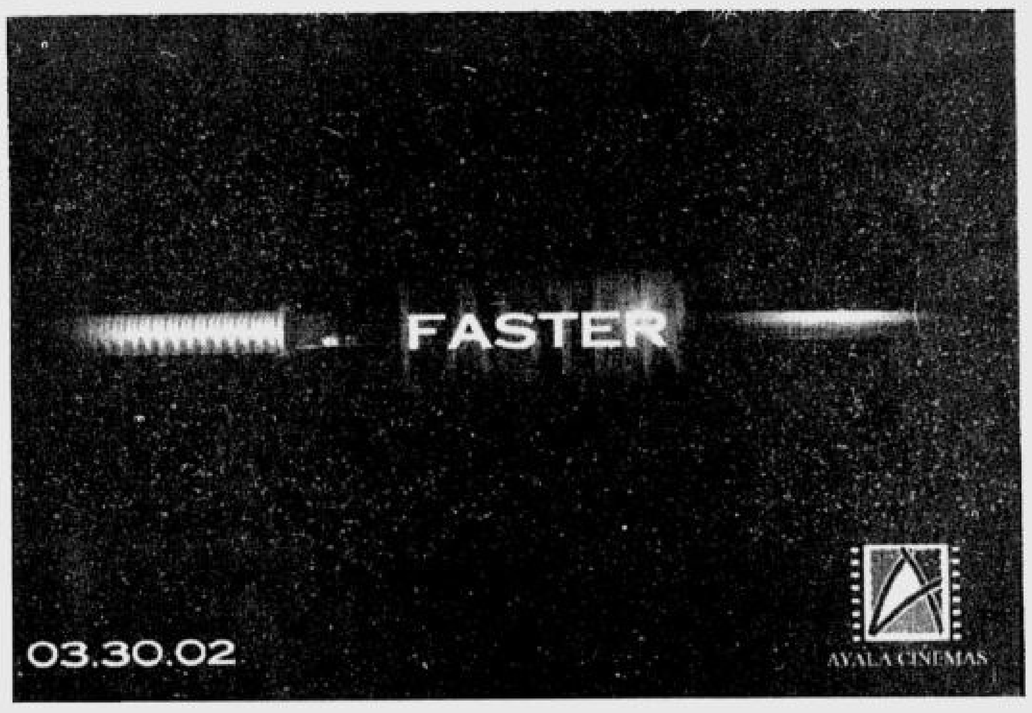
"UNADULTERATED, PROVOCATIVE, SENSUAL, ONCE-IN-A-LIFE-TIME, ROCK AND ROLL GENEUS!"
-- Janice Crawford,"V"Magazine

PERFUME is an improvisational piece set in the world of fashion which centers upon: Lorenzo Mancici, head of the Mancici fashion empire, who learns on his way to his own surprise birthday party that he has prostate cancer; mega-rap star McBrilliant, who along with Lorenzo's son Mario, is launching a new line of street fashion; Roberta, whose partner Camille has just left their company after seven years; Janice, editor of a ruthless fashion magazine; Anthony, a hipster photographer and Arianne a typical supermodel diva.

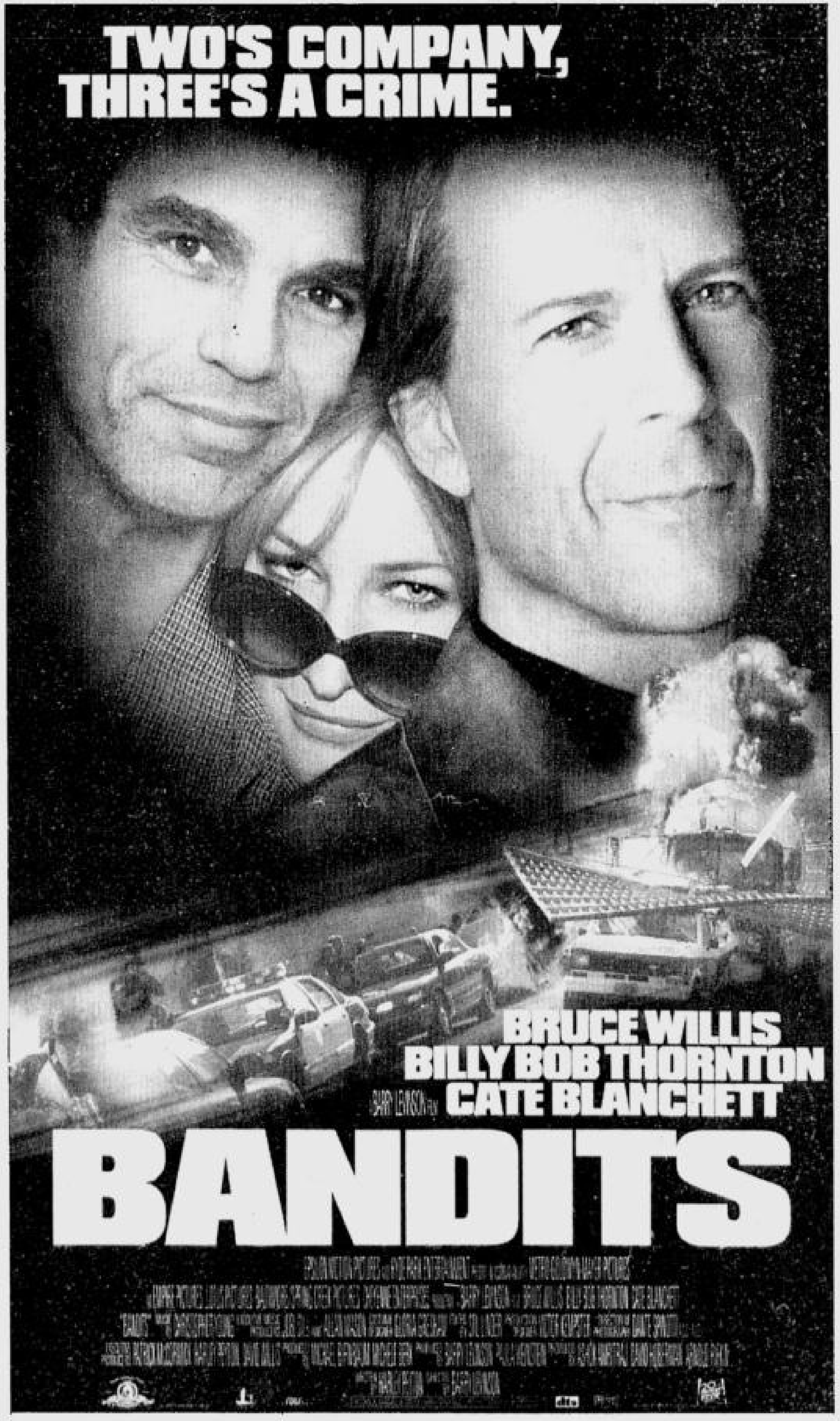
CAST: Carmen Electra, Omar Epps, Peter Gallagher, Jeff Goldblum, Mariel Hemingway, Estella Warren & Michelle Williams

MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13 (PG-13)

NOKIA SKYFILMS INQUIRER



MTRCB RATING PG 13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult. | Special thanks to: MAGIC 89.9 | 88.3 | WRocK



OPENS TOMORROW !

Prepare to be conned into laughter beginning TOMORROW!

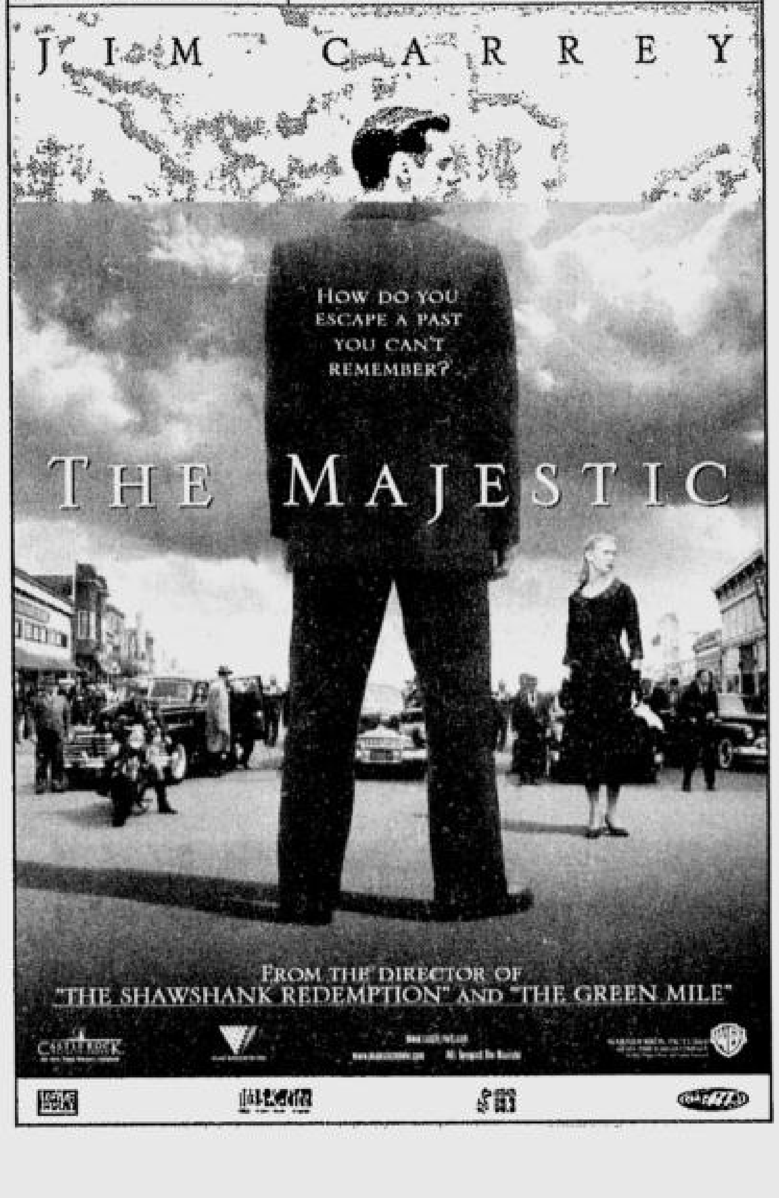
Angie Harmon
Charlie Sheen
Denise Richards
Only a desperate man will take over a woman's job.
Good Advice
SKYFILMS

MTRCB RATING PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.
Exclusively at Power Plant Cinema, Glorietta 4, SM Megamall, SM Manila, Robinson's Galleria, and Robinson's Ermita

OPENS TOMORROW !
MTRCB RATING PG-13 Children below 13 yrs.old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

AFTER KAMASUTRA COMES...
PLAYBOY
MARSHA YUEH
PLAYBOY'S CENTERFOLDS
SNAKE CHARMER

OPENS MARCH 20 !!!
MTRCB RATING GP General Patronage ALL AGES ADMITTED


JIM CARREY
HOW DO YOU ESCAPE A PAST YOU CAN'T REMEMBER?
THE MAJESTIC
FROM THE DIRECTOR OF "THE SHAWSHANK REDEMPTION" AND "THE GREEN MILE"

Boob-tube booboos

VIEWFINDE

Nestor U. Torre

HOST: You're so tall and beautiful, I really think you will do our country proud when you compete abroad!

Beauty queen: Thank you! I hope I can bring home the bacon!

Host: Where will the competition be held?

Beauty queen: The upcoming beauty contest will be held in Africa—so please pray for our country!

(Huh?!)

* * *

Host: Tell us about what you have lined up on your show this weekend . . .

Guest: Very special, *ibang-iba ang* show *namin—may mga* surprises *na medyo* unexpected!

(*Kaya nga* "surprises" *ang tawag doon, 'no*?!)

* * *

Host: How do you keep the romance alive in your marriage!

Guest: Siyempre, you try to do something special once in a while, like your wife going out in a dinner!

(How—romantic!)

* * *

Host: You are so successful as a salesman. What did you do to get where you are?

Guest: Believe it or not, nothing. I had no intention of being a salesman, *pero* accidentally I sold, so *ayan*!

(Portrait of the accidental salesman!)

* * *

Host: What are the values you impart to your children?

Guest: Above all, honesty.

Host: What about honesty?

Guest: It begins with its own individual!

(Duh.)

* * *

Host: What will our guests demonstrate today?

Cohost: Since this is Fire Prevention Month, how to put out fires.

Host: So that's why all these firemen are here in the studio with their hoses?

Cohost: Yes, *mag-de*-demonstrate *sila* how to put on a fire!

(Huh?)

* * *

Host: The demonstration is very realistic!

Cohost: Watch out, don't get in the way—*mahaba-haba pa naman itong* fireman!

(Ah, please explain?—One second thought, don't!)

* * *

Host: What do you like doing at the end of a busy day?

Guest: I like listening to mood music in my slippers—it takes a lot of loads off.

(Do tell!)

* * *

Host: Will the movie industry recover this year?

Guest: If fresh movies are made, maybe. There is a trend along that line.

Host: But, if no fresh concepts are created?

Guest: Then, it will be a nip in the bud.

(Ah, so . . .)

Season for giant sea eagle

AT 9 p.m. on Wednesday, March 20 on the National Geographic Channel's "Out There (Adventure starts Here) with Toyota," photographer **Mattias Klum** and his wife **Monika** travel to coastal Norway in search of the enormous and rare sea eagle, once hunted to the brink of extinction and now the subject of intense conservation efforts.

'A Bedful of Foreigners'

REPERTORY Philippines' production of **Dave Freeman**'s comedy play, "A Bedful of Foreigners," opens its run on Thursday, March 21 at the William J. Shaw Theater at Shangri-La Plaza Mall. Cocktails are at 7 p.m. and the play starts at 8 p.m.

'The Time Machine'

SIMON Wells' "The Time Machine" is currently the movie to beat at the North American box office, and its success makes its star, **Guy Pearce**, mighty proud.

In the film, Pearce plays inventor Alexander Hartdegen, who is determined to prove that time travel is possible. His determination is turned to desperation by a personal tragedy that drives him to want to change the past.

After inventing his time machine, Hartdegen finds himself 800,000 years into the future, where he discovers that mankind has divided into the hunters, and the hunted.

Pearce is an Australian and hopes to equal the success in international films currently being enjoyed by other Aussie actors like **Mel Gibson**, **Hugh Jackman** and **Heath Ledger**.

Fact is, Pearce was in "L.A. Confidential" with **Russell Crowe**, but Crowe has made it up the star escalator faster than Pearce. But, with showy starrers like "The Time Machine," Pearce should catch up with his contemporaries in a few more film seasons.

Why Larusso 'snubbed' her local fans

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

I GOT a call from **Mel** of EMI after the publication of my previous column where I wrote about readers complaining about Larusso's snubbing them after her show at the Megamall.

Ever since I got the rare chance to interview Larusso, I've been vocal about my admiration for the French chanteuse. I'm such a big fan of hers that I even translated her hit song "On Ne S'aimerai Plus Jamais" into English. And she told me she wants to record it. I was floored!

But in the spirit of fair play, I gave way to a reader's detailed account of his horrific experience with Larusso. Upon reading all the other e-mail I got regarding the Megamall incident, I began asking myself if Larusso was just being nice to me because I happen to be from the media and she showed a different side of her when fans mobbed her.

In fairness to the French diva, though, I've seen some local stars who don't have much of a choice but to walk out on their legions of fans after a performance, not because they want to but because of sheer exhaustion. They are ready willing but "disabled" to mingle with their fans a little longer. They are no robots who function by remote control.

But then again, I also empathize with some fanatics who take everything their idol does or doesn't do as if it were intentionally done to please and/or annoy him. That's the trouble with putting people on a pedestal. They can fall off anytime.

Mel comes to Larusso's defense: "Larusso was sick when she had a show at Megamall. Her hectic schedule and the heat which she was not used to took its toll. She was able to sign her autograph and pose for pictures with so many fans already after the Mega show.

"Unfortunately there were still a few left in the line that she could not attend to anymore because she felt like passing out already. In fact, she even sent a note to the Megamall administration to apologize for her sudden exit because she was ill."

Just to prove Larusso's sincerity, EMI Philippines is arranging a phone patch interview with Larusso in EMI France so I can get her side of the story. I will definitely let you in on how it turns out.

For now, why love Larusso's music (I play it non-stop even while I'm asleep) any less just because of her alleged prima donna ways? Live and let live!

VICE. A natural gift.

Sing and let her sing! *C'est la vie!*

Vice versatility

NO, he's not the second most powerful persona in many a graft-laden metropolitan municipality we often read about. In fact, his world is devoid of red tape and politics.

He's **Vice**, the latest stand-up comedian to make it big. His mission, he says, is to make people happy, no matter how shallow or short-lived that emotional state may be during these times. Vice knew early on that he had the knack for making people laugh. And it's not because he likes cross-dressing or anything like that. He thinks it's a natural gift.

The Library's **Andrew de Real** and comedian-host **Allan K** spotted Vice when he was being grilled on stage at a now-closed sing-along bar. The rest, they say, is history.

Last year in an Ortigas bar, first-time producer **Anna Tiu-Paz** gave Vice his biggest break. That show remains the highest-grossing show in that venue to date. Anna is again producing a much bigger show for Vice, in cooperation with San Miguel Beer.

On Saturday, March 23, Vice will have his first big show at the Music Museum called "Vice . . . Live!" No less than **Regine Velasquez** and **Ogie Alcasid** have agreed to be his special guests.

Bits and pieces

MONSOUR del Rosario is shooting his movie comeback with **Ara Mina** and **Dan Fernandez**. Mon took a break because he was busy setting up his gym, Olympian Takewondo Training Center (Karivin Plaza Pasong Tamo Extension, 728-5133 and 812-6328). Now that OTTC is in full swing, Mon can go back to doing what he does best next to taekwondo. He was supposed to train in martials in Korea but the movie offer came along. Mon is one of the few real action stars because he has the body, the muscles and the expertise that the image requires. Unlike most action stars, he needs no stuntman to double for him.

Nino Alejandro is busy wrapping up his solo album. I personally like his composition, "I Still Love You," which will be the carrier single. I'm pretty sure it will be a hit. It has a haunting melody and piercing lyrics that we Pinoys are suckers for. Hey, Nino, is that song "to whom it may concern?"

Edu Manzano's contract as host of "The Weakest Link" is expiring soon. He's still in a quandary whether to renew it or not. I know that TWL fanatics like me will clamor that he stay on. We have all developed a strong weakness for Edu as a host.

Mariah Carey is set to have a concert here soon if negotiations materialize. Will Regine Velasquez, who's touted as our local Mariah, do a back-to-back number with the diva? That will be eargasmic, huh?

'Magandang Umaga, Bayan'

I AM excited and nervous in equal parts over my stint in "Magandang Umaga Bayan" on "Alas Singko Y Medya" on ABS-CBN 2. I have been tapped to do their movie review segment every Thursday.

I must confess that I'm not exactly a morning person. All my friends know I'm lunar-powered. But the satisfaction I'll surely get from working with **Erwin Tulfo**, **Cheryl Cosim** and **Julius Babao** in "M.U.B" is too good to pass up. Thanaks to the staff and crew of "M.U.B." for the vote of confidence.

Personal

BEETHOVEN, I'm not giving up or giving in. Just giving way! Truce? You choose? I lose!

For feedback, e-mail luvludg@hotmail.com, friends_at_dsquare@yahoo.com, wateringhole2000@yahoo.com

SIDE A and Freestyle set to conquer Araneta Coliseum anew.

Side A, Freestyle 'Back2Back' returns to the Big Dome

SHOWS

EVEN to Maxi-Media, the idea of putting together two of the country bands in one show seemed daunting in the beginning. After all, both Side A and Freestyle are both successful in their respective recording and concert careers, each having developed solid following among their respective audiences. Máxi-Media was initially concerned about problems of billing, stage exposure and program sequencing which may arise in the process, as well as the more practical problems of scheduling of rehearsals and production meetings.

But when the idea of a joint concert with Side A and Freestyle was first broached to Side A's manager, Wyngard Tracy middle of last year, he supported the concept right away.

In the same token, Freestyle welcomed the project themselves.

The first back-to-back show was last Feb. 9. Two weeks after the first full-page print ad was released, the show was almost sold-out. The clamor for more tickets was so great that a second night had to be opened a day earlier on Feb. 8.

As expected, both nights were filled to the rafters.

The audience screamed, danced and sang along with the artists.

Joey G. carried out "I Don't Wanna Miss a Thing," while Freestyle vocalist Jinky Vidal rendered "So Slow" and Top Suzara sang "Superman."

The audience went wild when the bands performed dance hits like "Do You Believe," "Just Say Yeah," "Just Can't Get Enough" and a few others.

Then Freestyle crooned "Before I Let You Go" followed by Side A's "Forevermore."

Then the bands brought the house down with a back-to-back, counterpoint arrangement of "Bakit Ngayon Ka Lang?" and "Tell Me" as their grand finale.

Last Feb. 16, the two bands flew to Cebu City for a one-night gig at the open-air Cebu Sports Center. Around 13,000 young Cebuanos trooped to venue to watch the show.

On Feb. 22, Side A and Freestyle returned to Araneta for their third extension. The next stop was at Clark Field in Pampanga on Feb. 23.

Maxi-Media brings back "Back2Back" to the Araneta Coliseum for a final performance on March 23, this time as a benefit for Titans Medical Foundation Inc.

The show will also feature The Manouevres and Hotlegs.

"Back2Back: The Repeat" is presented by Mossimo, with support from Pepsi, Master Eskinol, Don Henrico's, Farlin Baby Care Products and radio stations RX 93.1, 93.9 KC-FM, Mellow Touch 94.7, 96.3 Wrock and Joey@Rhythms 92.3.

MILLADO. To perform at Hard Rock.

GUEVARRA. Launches second single.

For inquiries, call Maxi-Media at 551-7777 or Titans Medical Foundation Inc. at 731-2866.

'Jazz n' Grooves'

CITY Lite 88.3 presents the March installment of its "Jazz n Grooves" bar tour series, 9:30 tonight at Jazz Central (Jupiter St., Makati).

The show guarantees an evening of pure, unadulterated smooth jazz and rhythm and blues, performed by featured artist Anna Fegi, who will be backed-up by top jazz and R&B musicians.

"Jazz 'n Grooves" is also presented by Hi-lander Isuzu Crosswind.

Primeline artists

THE PRIMELINE artists of Ronnie and Ida Henares gear up for a sizzling summer when they launch shows this month.

Karylle, who cohosts "SOP" on Sundays on GMA 7, has been tapped to record the theme of GMA's new soap opera, "Kung Mawawala Ka," inspired by Ogie Alcasid's hit.

Vocalist Jed Maddela is busy preparing for his guest stint in Lani Misalucha's series of shows at Onstage in Greenbelt. The "Crossover" concert series is set for April 12, 13, 19, 20, 26 and 27.

Tootsie Guevarra recently launched her second single, "Sa Puso Ko," on "Asap." She will be busy promoting the single on TV, radio and in mall shows. She will also do corporate shows.

Nancy Castiglione crosses over to the big screen when she joins the cast of Regal Films' "Sweethearts," with Piolo Pascual and Joyce Jimenez.

Nancy also appears in the GMA 7 TV drama, "Sana ay Ikaw na Nga" and on the Thursday edition of ABS-CBN's noontime show, "MTB."

Radha, who has been making good progress in her solo career, will be busy with corporate shows this month. The same goes for new Primeline talent, Jeremie Antiporda.

Singers Aliya Parcs and Gail Blanco will come out with new projects this month.

Aliya, who has several corporate shows in her calendar, will be seen in a new TV commercial.

Gail, meanwhile, is busy preparing for her debut album under MCA Universal Records.

The hottest team on morning radio, Chico and Delamar, continues to dominate the airlanes with their daily show, "Morning Rush," on 93.9 KC-FM.

For inquiries and bookings, call Primeline Inc. at 897-6170 or 897-6172.

'Flower Power'

MARYKNOLL College Batch 1975 will sponsor the concert "Flower Power 2002," Mach 23, Saturday, 8 p.m. at the Via Mare Ballroom, Tektite, Ortigas, Pasig City.

"Flower Power 2002" features the Spirit of '67 Band playing favorite '70s songs. Special guests include Jacqui Magno and Richard Merk.

The event is a benefit for Miriam/Maryknoll College Scholarship Fund and the renovation of the Marian Auditorium.

Tickets priced at P500 each are available at Via Mare outlets, Miriam/Maryknoll College Alumnae (426-0170), Lulu Moguel (638-4048), Marivic Alvarez-Gancayco (867-1946) and Cosette Ferrer-Romero (893-5369).

'Lite Rock'

HARD Rock Café features Calvin Millado and Anna Fegi in the March leg of its long-running "Lite Rock at Hard Rock" monthly series, Wednesday, March 20, 9 p.m.

The concert showcases different musical genres, interpreted by local singers and musicians.

Calvin and Anna will render the best of pop, chart-topping hits, standards and R&B tunes.

On regular nights, Hard Rock features show bands. Pido with Take One and Q&A take centerstage on Mondays, Acoustic Jive and Civil Eyes perform on Tuesdays, Freeverse and Chad Borja sing on Wednesdays, Noel Cabangon and Big are featured on Thursdays, Soulid and Tribe of Levi go back-to-back on Fridays, Passage and Soulid perform on Saturdays and 9MM are featured on Sundays.

For inquiries, call 893-4661 to 63.

Joey Reyes to hold first TV and film scriptwriting workshop in Puerto Galera

AWARD-WINNING writer and director Joey Reyes will hold his first TV and film scriptwriting workshop in Tamaraw Beach Resort, Anunuan, Puerto Galera.

The three-day workshop will be facilitated by Grupong Tinta, a non-profit organization composed of writers and directors from the film and TV industry who aim to promote creative writing mainly through conducting workshops.

Reyes is known as one of the country's veteran scriptwriters behind such classics as "Oro, Plata, Mata" and the director of the controversial film, "Live Show."

Some of his works are "Batang PX," "Bayarang Puso," "May Minamahal," "Sinungaling Mong Puso," "Luksong Tinik" and "Narinig Mo na Ba ang Latest."

On TV, he was the scriptwriter of the now-defunct sitcom "Abangan ang Susunod na Kabanata" and currently writes and directs "Attagirl."

Workshop dates are on March 22, 23 and 24. The workshop is inclusive of meals and transportation. No professional writing experience is necessary. This will be on a first-come, first-serve basis.

For more details, call 925-7566 or Ryan Carlos at 0916-3561127.

JIM CAVIEZEL

'Little guy' makes it big

By Janet Susan R. Nepales

COUNTING his blessings, Caviezel (with Guy Pearce in "The Count of Monte Cristo") plays the title role with both innocence and ruthlessness.

LOS ANGELES—"You will never see my butt in a film unless I'm in the Holocaust, walking around," Jim Caviezel, star of Touchstone Pictures' new action-romance "The Count of Monte Cristo," once told a film critic.

A rarity in Hollywood, Caviezel, 33, is polite, gentlemanly, a devout Catholic and faithful to his wife.

His lovely Polish costar Dagmara Dominczyk, who appears as Mercedes, his fiancée, in "The Count of Monte Cristo," reveals: "When we were doing the little intimate scene outdoors, Jim was very nervous because he just got married to his wife (Kerrie, a high school English teacher). And to get the illusion that we were nude, I had to take my top off. I've done it before and I've done negligees so it was okay with me. But Jim was very nervous. He said, 'I don't think I'm very comfortable.'

"Since I had my jeans on, I just took off my underwear and put it on top of my breasts. From then on, he became more at ease and then he started telling me what to do to make the scene look better, like 'arch your head more.' The funny part was, since we were both Elvis Presley fans, he would be singing Elvis songs to me. He's a good mimic so he would sing 'Are You Lonesome Tonight?' while we were shooting our love scene. He's so sweet. He's the calmest person I've ever known."

We read in another interview that Caviezel also requested costar Jennifer Lopez to keep her top and shorts on and that he kept his jeans on when filming their love scene for the movie "Angel Eyes."

He says he makes these "special requests" out of respect, love and devotion to his wife. "I love my wife. She's the best thing that ever happened to me," he confesses.

He recalls that before he entered show business, a lot of people already warned him that there are a lot of temptations in the business. "But," he replies, "I have faith in God and my religion. If not for this strong faith, I would have gone the wrong way because there are too many temptations. Prayer gives me peace. That's why I hear Mass, read the Scriptures and pray the rosary regularly. Temptation isn't going to make you happy."

Moody shades

Today, on this sunny Saturday afternoon at the Ritz Carlton Hotel in Marina del Rey, Caviezel is dressed in a brown leather jacket, a black ribbed tight shirt, and khaki pants with his hair brushed and gelled back.

The 6-foot-2 former college basketball player welcomes us with a serious, almost melancholy tone of voice. Then he breaks into a mischievous smile and tells jokes. He can also talk about his faith endlessly and how it influences every decision that he makes in his life, including the movie roles that he decides to accept.

Does he feel he is getting projects that show all his sides?

Caviezel replies, "Are you referring to all my shades of moodiness in my roles? You know it's very hard to play moody. (He pretends to look sad.) (Laughter) You know, when you play a certain role, people will say that's what he's like. It's easy to play that role.

"I remember when I was in Seattle and I was the lead in a Neil Simon play. A lady, who was also a casting director, came in and watched the play. She told my manager, 'I think he's great but I just don't see him as a dramatic actor.'"

Director Kevin Reynolds, known for his Kevin Costner movies "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves" and "Waterworld," points out that "Jim has some ambiguous, mysterious aspect to him that is really apropos for the Count. The young Edmond Dantes is naïve but as we go through the course of the story, he goes from an embittered, broken man to a ruthless, driven character who is hard about what has happened to him.

"There is a little bit of the inexplicable about Jim that I thought would serve the role well. The big question was, 'Can he accomplish both the innocent and the ruthless, hardened man of the world?' And he did! Some can do one or the other but it is really very difficult to do both. And he pulled it off."

Meaty roles

Nobody imagined that the quiet, soft-spoken James Caviezel from Mount Vernon, Washington, could act until a sport injury forced him to try his hand at acting. After hurdling an audition by faking an Italian accent, he landed a part in "My Own Private Idaho." Then he was accepted at Juilliard but he turned down the school's offer in favor of a supporting role in "Wyatt Earp."

Director Terrence Malick, known for giving former unknowns such as Richard Gere and Martin Sheen their big breaks, handed Caviezel his first major role. In Malick's critically-acclaimed war epic "The Thin Red Line," Caviezel appeared with Ben Chaplin, Sean Penn, George Clooney and Nick Nolte.

Caviezel landed other meaty roles in Ang Lee's "Ride with the Devil," Oliver Stone's "Any Given Sunday," "Frequency" with Dennis Quaid, "Pay it Forward" with Helen Hunt and Kevin Spacey and "Angel Eyes" with Lopez.

Caviezel's training for the role of the Count of Monte Cristo, the popular character from Alexandre Dumas' classic, was intense. Caviezel and costar Guy Pearce underwent a month of intensive training on how to use the sword and how to fence properly.

"We trained at least three hours a day every day," Caviezel reveals. He also did a lot of research on his own. "I found myself caught up in the story of Alexander Dumas—why he wasn't accepted by his father, what pushed him into writing the story of Edmond Dantes and why he wanted to prove himself and make something of his life. And so I wanted to know a lot about him."

Learning

Working with acclaimed actor Pearce ("Memento," "L.A. Confidential," "Ravenous," "Priscilla, Queen of the Desert") as the devious and scheming Fernand and the legendary Richard Harris as the all-knowing philosophical inmate-priest Abbe Faria was a treat for Caviezel.

Asked about the infamous Harris, Caviezel says, "He said to me one time (in a gruff tone), 'Thish will help you relaax. Have a Guinnessh. It's very nutrishusss!' (Laughter) Yes, I learned quite a bit from him since I'm the only guy in the jail cell with him. And so I got all his attention—either that or we didn't talk. But he had many many good stories to tell me and I picked his brain quite a bit because I wanted to know about things, his history, his sports background, because I had one too, and how he used that.

"The other thing I learned from him is his thought process. It is simply extraordinary how he uses dialect. I would go through the script and I would see how he circled words and drew lines. Technically, I think that was the biggest thing I've learned from him."

From director Reynolds, Caviezel says he learned one important thing—"Keep it real."

"Kevin always told me to 'keep it real, keep it real.' Even to Richard Harris he would say that. And we all did exactly that."

Relating to goodness

He also points out that "Kevin is a people director. He's not the kind who'd say or act like 'I'm a Hollywood director, you can't teach me anything anymore.' He respects everybody. And that humility I love.

"I used to be the so-called 'little guy.' I was a waiter before. So I got treated terribly by a lot of people. Now when they come up to me and try to be friendly, I don't trust them because I remember what they did to me and how they treated me when I was down.

"I know they're just being kind to me today because of where I'm at right now. If I see a guy who is not good to another guy at my level, then I know I could not trust that person because it's just a matter of time when I won't have a hit film and then I will be off their list and they would not be calling me. It's the goodness in other people that I could relate to."

Caviezel adds, "The values I have may seem odd today, but I believe that my faith has gotten me where I am today. And I'm happy."

Lighthouse Family soloist finds Manila 'a home away from home'

By Marinel R. Cruz

FOR Nigerian singer Tunde Baiyewu, making records for Lighthouse Family had never been about money.

PHOTOS BY JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

A THREE-DAY visit in Manila was all it took Lighthouse Family main man Tunde Baiyewu to describe the city as "a home away from home." Manila, says Tunde, reminded him of his hometown in Lagos, Nigeria.

Tunde was here for a one-night performance at Dish at the Powerplant Mall in Makati to promote the band's latest album "Whatever Gets You Through the Day."

He said he couldn't help but feel nostalgic at the sight of cramped metal buses, motorcycle-riding commuters and the traffic in Edsa.

"Not to mention dogs walking on the street and mosquitoes buzzing in your ears," he joked.

"The weather is similar to Nigeria's since the Philippines also has a hot climate. I understand this is even one of your colder days."

Southeast Asian tour

Tunde's Manila visit concluded a Southeast Asian tour that also brought the group to Singapore, Jakarta and Bangkok.

"Whatever Gets You Through the Day," locally distributed by MCA Universal, is the group's latest offering after the phenomenal success of "Postcards From Heaven," which was released in 1997.

Tunde said that "Whatever Gets You . . ." still imbibes elements that make Lighthouse Family—expressive lyrics by Paul Tucker, Lighthouse Family's brilliant other half; Tunde's distinct velvety voice and their unique Soul and French house music influence.

"We know that (these elements) are what define us and that nobody else has them," said Tunde. "But sonically we think it is important to move on. This (album) has a completely new sonic texture. The sound is now more organic, more back-to-basics."

Also noteworthy is the fact that Paul Tucker had written just about the whole album. The lyrics draw strength from their simplicity. They also made sure all of the 14 tracks complemented each other and could be sellout singles in their own right, according to Tunde.

The album's first single, "Free/One," a smooth blend of Nina Simone's "I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel To Be Free" and U2's "One," is slowly getting more local airplay.

Stomach problem

Unfortunately, Paul was not able to join Tunde in Manila because of a stomach problem.

"He's OK now. It's just that the flight to Singapore took about 12 hours and made him ill," Tunde said. "He wanted to come, but I think if he did while he's sick, we wouldn't be able to do anything."

Tunde met Paul nine years ago in Newcastle. Paul had just finished a degree in French and German, and Tunde, a degree in accounting when they both found themselves without an active job.

Though Tunde worked as a bartender, he was still trying to find out what he really wanted to do after college. Paul had already written a song, "Ocean Drive," that he wanted to record and had placed notices all over the school looking for a vocalist.

While working at a bar, Tunde met several disk jockeys. One of them was taking up music technology and asked Tunde to sing as part of his class work.

Record companies

"This DJ, Wayne, arranged for Paul and I to meet. Paul made me listen to 'Ocean Drive.' When we recorded it, people were jumping up and down telling us to get it out there," recalled Tunde.

Paul sent copies of the demo to record companies, radio stations in Newcastle and even underground stations where their DJ friends worked. Within a week, there was an influx of phone calls from record companies all wanting to meet with the duo.

"I was quite reluctant. I think that left us in good stead in a way because we didn't come across as a bunch of eager beavers," Tunde said.

Being a singer just did not seem like a proper job to Tunde at that time.

"When your parents send you to a university, they sort of expect you to be a doctor, a lawyer or an engineer. It has put a lot of pressure on me. I couldn't even tell my mom," he said.

It had not been an easy climb to the top of the charts for the duo after they signed up with Polydor in 1995.

"Ocean Drive" fizzled out after its release and Polydor had to reissue it several months later. But the album's second launching resulted in a double platinum award and sales of an astounding $2.5 million.

The group's next offering, "Postcards From Heaven," became a sellout, with singles like "Lost in Space" and "High" topping even local music charts. The album eclipsed "Ocean Drive" with its over $3.7 million in sales.

With the success of an album comes the pressure to eclipse it with the next. But Tunde said they never felt burdened because making records for them had never been about money.

"You do it because you love it, otherwise, you cannot convince anyone to love it," Tunde said.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BUSINESS

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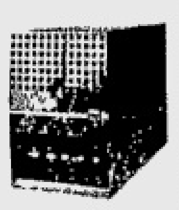

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91-day T-bill rate hits historic low

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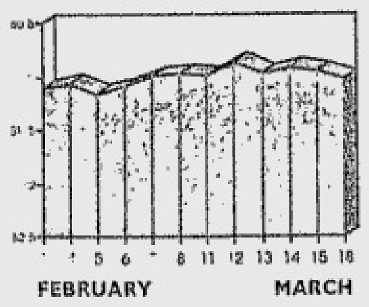


PESO-DOLLAR RATE

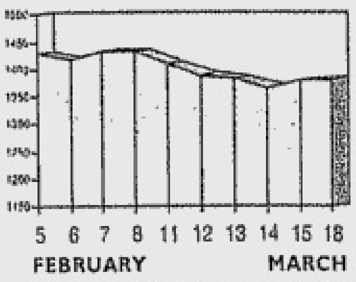
₱51.03 = $1
As of 5 p.m., March 18, 2002

¥130.44 = $1
As of 5 p.m., March 18, 2002

GOLD: $290.70/291.20
per ounce Hong Kong, March 18, 2002

STOCK MARKET

Stocks end up



(See stock market report on Page B2)

STOCKS sneaked into positive territory yesterday, supported by gains in Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT), but with approaching holidays keeping interest light, traders said.

The main index finished up 1.72 points, or 0.12 percent, at 1,381.33 points.

There were 47 decliners, 22 advancers and 31 borrowers.

Turnover rose to P479.75 million from P323.24 million but the level was well below daily trades of P1 billion or more during the market rally earlier in the year.

With the Holy Week break looming next week and tax payments due in April, many investors were moving to the sidelines to keep their funds liquid, traders said.

Eagle Equities president Joey Roxas said the market was typically quiet in the run-up to Holy Week and the tax payments season in April, though after its slide last week some selected bargain hunting was now expected.

"The whole index is oversold . . . so we might see some bargain hunting over the next few days," Roxas said, adding, however, any gains would be limited ahead of next week's holiday-shortened trading.

United Coconut Planters Bank Trust fund manager Vanessa Lim, however, said there were no new strong developments to snap the market out of its current bout of consolidation.

"In the near term we will remain in a corrective phase . . . next week I do not expect to see any real improvement."

Another fall in benchmark 91-day T-bills to a fresh record low at Monday's auction failed to shore up buying. *Reuters*

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE BENCHMARK 91-day treasury bill rate fell to a historic low of 5.488 percent at the weekly government auction yesterday.

However, National Treasurer Sergio Edeza said he did not see much room for it to fall further, indicating that the rate has bottomed out.

The 91-day bill yield, used by banks to price loans, fell from last week's 6.714 percent, which was the previous historic low.

"I don't expect any significant downward movement from now on," Edeza told reporters after the auction.

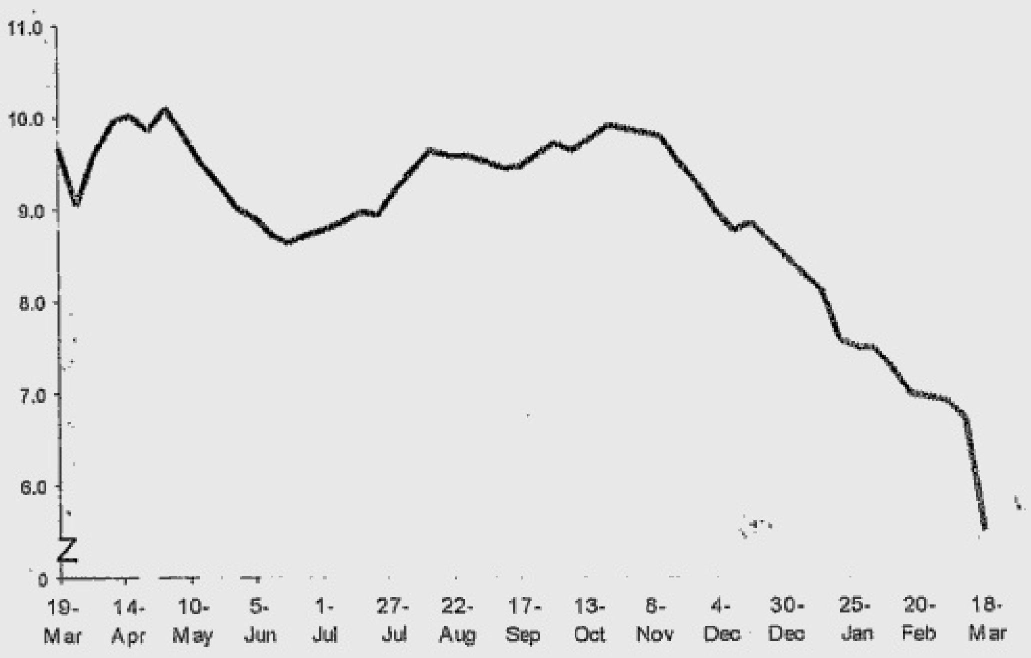
He had predicted the rate would fall about 10-20 basis points from the previous week and said the 1.22 percentage point drop yesterday "was a pleasant surprise."

The 182-day bill fetched a rate of 6.217 percent from the previous 7.086 percent.

Edeza said the fall in the rate was because of a confluence of factors, including high liquidity in the system and a cut in overnight rates of the central bank last week.

Traders had earlier said banks were also looking for short-term investments like T-bills because of the upcoming Easter holidays.

The Bangko Sentral cut the overnight borrowing rate to 7 percent—the lowest since 1992—effective from last Friday and the overnight lending rate to 9.25 percent.



Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho attributed the fall in treasury bill rates to the new tiering arrangement imposed by the central bank last week on funds placed by commercial banks with it.

Last week, the Bangko Sentral discouraged banks from depositing excess funds with it by ordering placements in all its borrowing instruments to be totaled up, with a tiering system imposed on the total amount of placements.

The central bank now pays 7.25 to 7.375 percent for deposits of P5 billion and below depending on the instrument, 4.25 percent on the next P5 billion worth of placements and 1.25 percent for deposits totaling above P10 billion.

The Treasury also opened a P1.5-billion tap facility in the over-the-counter market for

91-DAY B3

2-month net foreign fund inflow at $71.8M

SHORT-TERM foreign funds have started trickling back to the local market as the level of net portfolio inflow rose to $71.8 million in the first two months of the year, up by 409 percent from only $14.1 million a year ago.

Documents submitted to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas by five custodian banks showed that the level of inbound funds as of end-February reached $150.4 million, almost double the January level of $79.1 million and higher by 24 percent than the $120.9 million in February last year.

However, outbound foreign money in February worth $85.8 million was also higher than its month-ago level of $71.9 million although 36 percent lower than the February 2001 level of $134.6 million.

During the first day of March, however, outflow of $39.9 million outpaced inflow of $33.4 million, leading to a net outflow of $6.5 million. As of March 1, the net inflow was slightly lower at $50.9 million.

The central bank said it was expecting more portfolio funds to enter in the coming months alongside an increase in foreign direct investment as confidence of foreign investors in the Philippine government continued to improve.

"When you have a stable political and economic environment as rating agencies confirm like Moody's, then the chances that portfolio funds would stay longer would be better," a central bank official said.

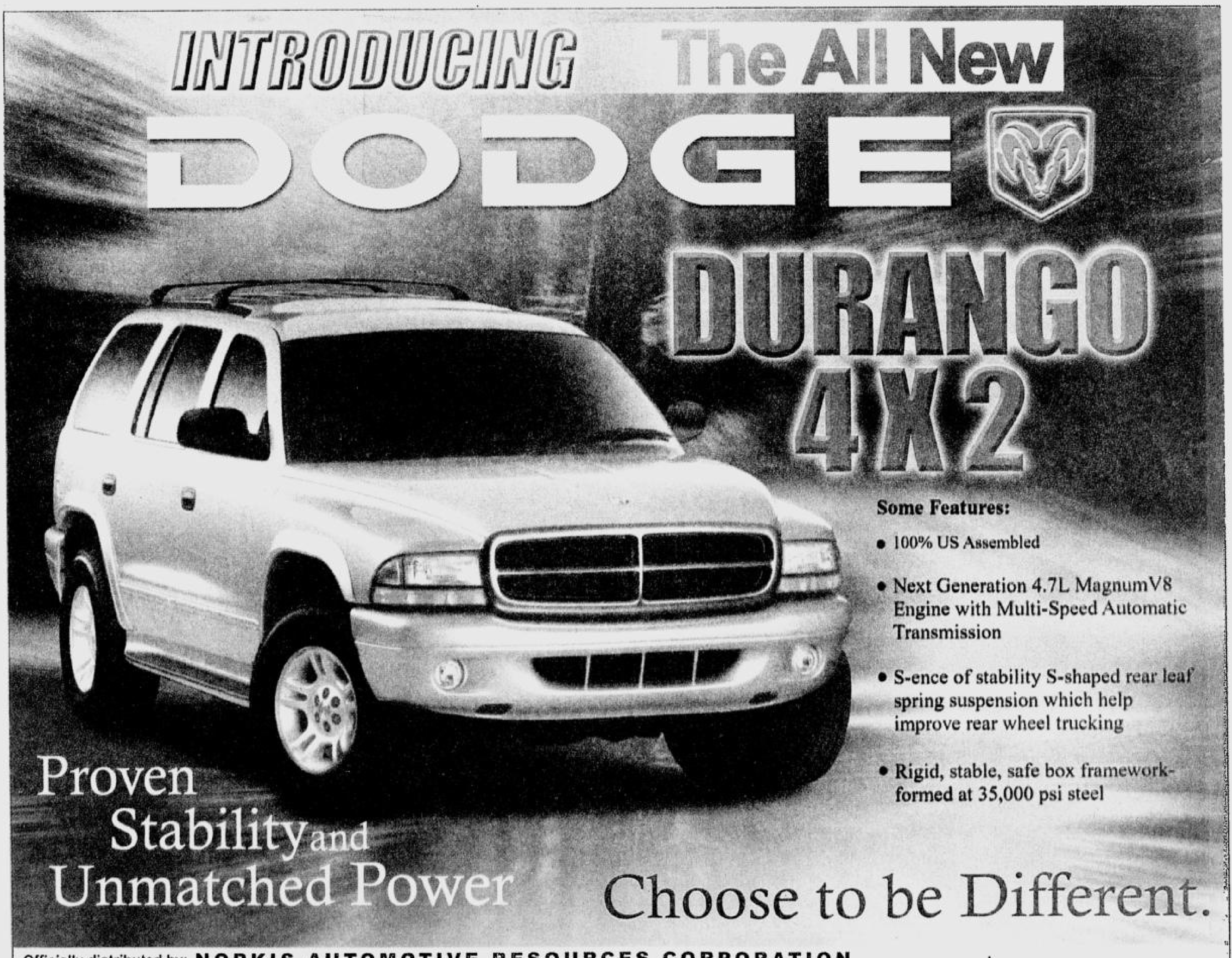
This year, portfolio investments may not be as erratic as the previous years, the official said, even as the nature of hot money was normally migratory and largely sentiment driven.

Foreign portfolio funds are normally invested in the stock market, government securities, mutual funds and insurance.

In January, the Philippine stock market index went up by about 19 percent, making it one of the best performing equities markets in the world. Even the volume of trading in the local bourse boomed and averaged P1 billion, a signal that foreign funds were going back to bargain-hunt or cherry-pick.

But troubles in the leadership of the PSE had

2MONTH/ B3



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Meeting of the mimes

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

LAST week, the biggest jueteng operators in Luzon held a luncheon meeting. Just like in the movies, one by one, the 15 or so of them arrived at a big hotel in Manila.

Nobody knows if, during the meeting, they tackled the problems of Balikatan. I'm sure they did not talk about what sacrifices they would make for the Holy Week.

Say what you will about the bigtime jueteng operators in Luzon, but they are not your ordinary Rotary Club. They don't get together every week for socials.

When they meet, it's not as if those gambling lords just need a reason to get out of the office. They don't have to justify using their representation for a free lunch.

I am telling you, boss, those guys set aside fantastic sums for, ahh, "representation." It amounts to billions upon billions of pesos every year.

The going rate today is, for the level of PNP regional head, P5 million a month. In Rotary Club terms, that's enough for three lifetimes of meetings. Every day, at that!

* * *

SO what in Bong Pineda's name did they, in that closed-door meeting of the best and the brightest jueteng minds, in a private room of the hotel's Chinese restaurant, talk about?

When the info reached me last Thursday, I had a mind to barge into their . . . well, "social function." I just don't know if I could bluff my way out—with my jaw still intact.

We can only wonder what they talked about. Don't tell me they did not talk about anything at all? What are they—mimes? It wasn't a meeting of the mimes, believe me.

It must have been a business meeting. Jueteng operators, like it or not, always make it their business to, er, "contribute" to the campaign funds of certain politicos.

Today, jueteng remains a big political issue, simply because it finances a lot of politics. The operators can afford it anyway since they generate billions of pesos.

All that is tax free! All underground! Just like any big business, for the illegal numbers game to thrive, the operators must, therefore, seek the blessings of politics.

As you know, this cute administration of Gloriaetta says it is dead serious in its campaign against jueteng. Were the jueteng lords worried about the crackdown? Hmm.

* * *

IN the past, they were also dead serious in campaigns against jueteng. They have been saying it ever since the Quezon administration.

Yet, jueteng is still very much around. It has been around since the Spanish era, much longer than anyone of us. It will stay around much longer than all of us.

The alleged crackdown, whatever little this cute administration has to show for it, doesn't worry the jueteng operators at all. They can always massage their way out of it.

But there's a new kid in town! I think, for all illegal activities like drug trafficking and jueteng, the thing to watch is this new anti-money laundering law.

It's hard to move around billions of pesos physically. In any big underground operation like drugs or jueteng, they surely need the services of banks.

And that, to me, precisely, should be the main target of the laundering law. Hit them where it hurts! No, of course not, never in their genitals. In their fat bank accounts!

* * *

COMELEC Chair Alfredo Benipayo, who, from all indications so far, is losing favor with Gloriaetta, claims that he is the target of a well-funded demolition job in media.

He points to Photokina as the financier. In public, mind you! The Comelec chair does not hesitate to state his claim in public. Gosh, he said it on free television.

Photokina happens to be the "winner," as declared by the group of Comelec Commissioner Luzviminda Tancangco, in a bidding for a huge contract.

Just in case you need any introduction, certain stockholders of Photokina are also the owners of the Red Bull team in the professional basketball league PBA.

The point is, Photokina is not your ordinary pushover group. Surely, it has clout. It also has connections, particularly during the time of the man named Band . . . Wrist Band.

Unlike gutless spineless columnists, ehem, Benipayo doesn't even hide behind metaphors for Photokina. How come I believe him? Is it because I was also approached?

* * *

ANYWAY, over at Angel Radyo at one time, Benipayo told me that the P5-billion Photokina deal was exorbitant. He claimed it could be done in less than P400 million.

Now yesterday, also on Angel Radyo, Tancangco told me that Photokina won in the bidding. The other two bidders submitted prices of more than P7 billion.

So how come the Comelec did not declare it a failed bidding? I mean, if there were only three bidders, they could also collude to cheat the government, could they not?

Tancangco said, well, to begin with, the Comelec had no estimate for the price of the contract. In short, the Comelec had no basis for what the price should be. Whaaat?

I don't know, but since the beginning of time, our problem has always been money. The Comelec called for a bidding for a project without a clue as to its price. Nice!

I say it's the biggest reason why this Comelec should throw the Photokina deal out of the window. While we're at it, all Comelec commissioners should also resign.

* * *

ALMOST three years after the BW scandal erupted in the stock market, and after almost two years of investigation, the Department of Justice filed cases in court. Finally!

But in fairness to Justice Secretary Hernando Perez, the department pursued the cases vigorously only under him. Nobody could touch it before Nani's time.

Still, the DOJ filed cases against only a few individuals. Dropped were several names originally recommended by the SEC for filing of criminal charges. What to do?

SEC Chair Lilia Bautista says the Securities and Exchange Commission still has administrative cases against those individuals. In short, they pay dearly. Literally.

Some of them already paid fines of P40,000 per offense. All in all, based on the SEC cases, the fines can reach millions of pesos.

It's not too much to pay. After all, they made a lot of money out of that stock manipulation, which was the biggest ever in the history of the market.

Granted, they now say they never took part in the manipulation. It's just that they knew about it, and they rode on it. In short, they kept quiet. And these are model citizens!

Local IT company, US call center firm form joint venture

By Doris C. Dumlao

MINING-turned-IT holding company Island Information and Technology Inc. has entered into a joint venture deal with American firm US Asia Solutions Inc. to establish a call center business in the Philippines.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, IITI president Andres Lao Sr. said the joint venture business would be 80 percent owned by IITI and 20 percent by US Asia Solutions.

Lao said the joint venture would have an initial capital of P120 million but IITI had committed to invest up to P300 million over the next three years.

IITI shares have been rising in the stock market this year on expectations that the company would venture into the call center business with a foreign partner. Its share price opened at 2.4 centavos in January and peaked at 9.5 centavos in late February.

Call centers are used by mail-order catalog organizations, telemarketing companies, computer product help desks and other organizations or companies that use the telephone to sell or service products and services.

Typically, a call center has the ability to handle, screen and log a considerable volume of calls at the same time.

US Asia Solutions, which has been in the call center industry within the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Europe and Asian since 1962 was appointed to manage the call center operations of the new joint venture.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Monday, March 18, 2002)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Bank of the Phil. Islands	65.5	65.5	64.5	64.5	943,400
Citystate Savings Bank	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	33.5	33.5	33	33.5	108,700
First E-Bank Corp.	2.48	2.55	2.48	2.48	58,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	44	45	43.5	44	32,400
Philippine National Bank	61	61	61	61	1,400
Phil. Savings Bank	27	27	27	27	2,500
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	3,800
Union Bank of the Phil.	20.5	20.5	20.5	20.5	20,100
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	100,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	250,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1380	1390	1380	1390	5,040
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1030	1040	1030	1040	23,170
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	32.5	33.5	32.5	33.5	37,000
Diversified Fin. Network	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	1,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.71	0.71	0.69	0.7	1,740,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	795	795	790	790	130
Ipeople Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	30,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.07	0.0725	0.0675	0.07	120,500,000
Piltel	0.47	0.47	0.45	0.45	1,100,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	515	535	515	535	125,610
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.021	0.022	0.021	0.022	23,400,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	30.5	30.5	30	30.5	72,000
Manila Electric Co. B	45	45	42.5	42.5	2,849,000
Petron Corp.	1.8	1.84	1.78	1.82	3,683,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	20,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.12	1.12	1.12	1.12	[illegible]
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.5	2.5	2.46	2.48	[illegible]
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	200,000
Negros Navigation Co. Inc.	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.51	260,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.52	1.52	1.52	1.52	286,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.28	2.28	2.18	2.28	1,599,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	12.5	12.5	12.25	12.5	441,900
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	23	23	22.25	22.25	83,600
RFM Corp.	1.52	1.52	1.48	1.5	2,318,000
Swift Food Inc.	2	2	2	2	45,000
San Miguel Corp. A	47.5	47.5	47	47	23,100
San Miguel Corp. B	62	62.5	62	62	96,900
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.51	10,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.52	0.52	0.52	0.52	10,000
Ayala Corp.	6.5	6.6	6.5	6.6	2,378,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.96	1.98	1.92	1.96	317,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73	100,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	67,000,000
Anglo Phil. Holdings Corp.	0.32	0.32	0.3	0.3	150,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.2	120,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	10,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.78	0.78	0.75	0.77	6,980,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.3	0.3	1,350,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	30,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	0.105	0.105	0.1	0.1	2,710,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.06	1.12	1.06	1.12	1,126,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	1,000
F&J Prince Holdings Corp.	0.88	0.88	0.88	0.88	120,000
First Phil. Hldgs. Corp.	31	31	31	31	38,800
Ionics Inc.	7.8	7.8	7.6	7.6	44,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.86	1.86	1.86	1.86	5,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	40,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.84	0.84	0.84	0.84	2,680,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.55	0.57	0.55	0.57	780,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.31	0.31	0.3	0.3	410,000
Music Corp.	0.29	0.3	0.29	0.3	900,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	80,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	4	4	4	4	25,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	20,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.27	0.28	0.27	0.28	100,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Pryce Corp.	0.1	0.1	0.09	0.09	4,500,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	14	14.25	14	14	15,600
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.48	0.48	1,700,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.57	0.58	0.57	0.58	300,000
Mondragon Intl Phils. Inc.	0.44	0.48	0.44	0.48	370,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	500,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	33	34	33	34	44,800
DMCI Holdings Inc.-Pref.	795	795	790	790	2,420
Globe Telecom Hldg. (Pdr)	780	780	780	780	140
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0012	0.0012	0.0012	0.0012	50,000,000
Philweb.Com Inc.-Warrants	0.0055	0.006	0.0055	0.0055	26,000,000
OTHERS					
Far Eastern University	450	450	450	450	250
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.5	6.5	6.4	6.5	7,928,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.39	0.39	0.38	0.38	150,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	560,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.47	0.47	0.46	0.47	2,980,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	2,720,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.1	2.28	2.1	2.28	12,989,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.39	0.39	0.38	0.39	600,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	100,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.5	6.5	6.3	6.4	3,047,000
MINING					
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't.	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	1,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.042	0.042	0.04	0.04	5,000,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	2,100,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.21	0.21	0.205	0.21	4,050,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	49,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.0038	0.0038	0.0036	0.0038	10,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0048	0.005	0.0048	0.005	10,000,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	4,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	3,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	20,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.225	10,000
Pacifica	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	5,500,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	500,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	1,550,510	98,031,200.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	334,351,250	277,685,845.00
PRO	31,074,000	101,779,980.00
Mining	80,151,000	1,728,950.00
OIL	33,010,000	358,450.00
GRAND TOTALS:	480,136,760	479,584,425.00

AVERAGES		
Banks & Fin Svc	557.56	DOWN 3.39
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,902.14	UP 9.70
PRO	590.77	DOWN 1.67
Mining	1,310.56	DOWN 3.33
OIL	1.75	DOWN 0.01
All Shares Index	752.26	UP 3.66
Composite	1,381.33	UP 1.72

NO. OF ADVANCES: 22; NO. OF DECLINES: 47; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 31; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 100; NO. OF TRADES: 2,169

CURRENCIES

March 18, 2002

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.132759	1.000000	50.9410
Japan	Yen	0.008773	0.007745	0.3945
United Kingdom	Pound	1.614182	1.425000	72.5909
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.145239	0.128217	6.5315
Switzerland	Franc	0.683826	0.603682	30.7522
Canada	Dollar	0.715442	0.631592	32.1739
Singapore	Dollar	0.622225	0.549300	27.9819
Australia	Dollar	0.595876	0.526039	26.7970
Bahrain	Dinar	3.004827	2.652661	135.1292
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.302070	0.266667	13.5843
Brunei	Dollar	0.620486	0.547765	27.9037
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000113	0.000100	0.0051
Thailand	Baht	0.026203	0.023132	1.1784
UAE	Dirham	0.308419	0.272272	13.8698
Korea	Won	0.000863	0.000762	0.0388
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.882800	44.9707
Brazil	Real	0.481862	0.425532	21.6770
Denmark	Kroner	0.484085	0.427350	21.7696
India	Rupee	0.134572	0.118800	6.0518
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.023293	0.020563	1.0475
Mexico	New Peso	0.124863	0.110229	5.6152
New Zealand	Dollar	0.494892	0.436891	22.2557
Norway	Kroner	0.128730	0.113643	5.7891
Pakistan	Rupee	0.018910	0.016694	0.8504
South Africa	Rand	0.095190	0.084034	4.2808
Sweden	Kroner	0.109540	0.096702	4.9261
Syria	Pound	0.025862	0.022831	1.1630
Taiwan	NT Dollar	0.032467	0.028662	1.4601
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.001225	0.001081	0.0551

DISCLOSURES

SQL Wizard Inc. postponed its annual stockholders' meeting to give the company more time to finalize its audited financial statements.

* * *

SPI Technologies Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 30 with record date on April 30.

* * *

PRUDENTIAL Bank announced the extension of Felipe Gella's employment in the bank as vice president and corporate secretary. Also, the annual stockholders' meeting was postponed indefinitely pending completion of its annual report.

* * *

MONDRAGON International Philippines Inc. moved its annual stockholders' meeting to Sept. 16, 9 a.m. at the Mondragon House Ballroom, Makati City.

* * *

ISLAND Information & Technology Inc. entered into an 80-20 joint venture agreement with **US Asia Solutions Inc.** to establish an outbound call center operation. Initial capital of the venture was set at P120 million with Island investing up to P300 million within the next three years.

* * *

LEISURE & Resorts World Corp. moved its annual stockholders' meeting from April 16 to the third quarter of the year.

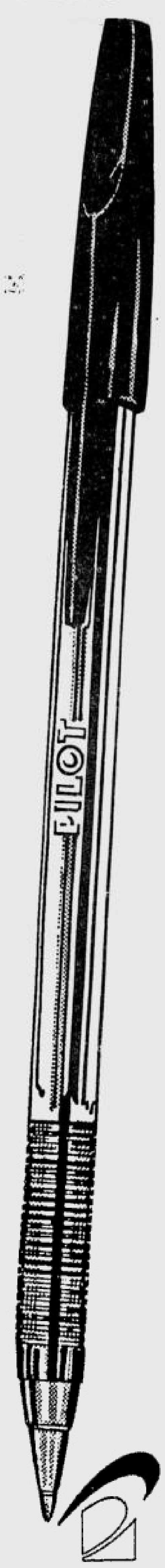
* * *

DIVERSIFIED Financial Network Inc. moved its annual stockholders' meeting to May 29, 2 p.m. with the record date set on April 16. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

SuperBrands Survey 2001

voted by readers SUPER BRAND Gold 2001 Reader's Digest Philippines

PILOT



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G & W clubshares
SEC License Broker No.: A-17597
As of March 18, 2002

CLUB	SELLER	BUYER
Alabang Country Club "A"	1,700,000	-
Alta Vista	-	280,000
Baguio Country Club	740,000	650,000
Camp John Hay	300,000	-
Capitol Hills Golf & CC	140,000	115,000
Calatagan Golf	80,000	-
Canyon Woods	200,000	190,000
Canlubang	-	-
Celebrity Sports	230,000	170,000
City Sports Club	-	Pls. Call
Eagleridge "A"	350,000	-
Eastridge	200,000	-
Evercrest	100,000	80,000
Fairways & Blue Waters	650,000	-
Fontana DIC	90,000/140,000	Pls. Call
Forest Hills "A"	230,000	200,000
Forest Hills "C"	250,000	240,000
Luisita Golf	-	300,000
Manila Polo		2,800,000
Makati Sports Club	300,000	250,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	650,000	-
Mimosa Golf Ind./C3*	170,000/300,000*	120,000
Mt. Malarayat	350,000	-
Orchard	210,000	200,000
Orchard "B"	-	250,000
Phil Columbian	80,000	60,000
Punta Fuego	600,000	550,000
Puerto Azul	170,000	-
Quezon City Sports Club	240,000	200,000
Riviera Golf "A"/"C"*	200,000/450,000*	-
Riviera Golf "B"	250,000	-
Rockwell	400,000	380,000
Royale Tagaytay A/C	90,000/140,000	Pls. Call
Sherwoods	120,000	-
Subic Bay Yacht Club "Corp"	400,000	Pls. Call
Subic Golf	100,000	-
Tagaytay Country Club	-	380,000
Tagaytay Highlands Golf & CC	830,000	700,000
Tagaytay Midlands	-	600,000
Valley Golf & CC	-	230,000
Valle Verde (Indv.)	175,000	160,000

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Mon. - Fri. 9:00 am - 6:00 pm Sat., 8:00 am - 12:00 pm
Unit 1402 Medical Plaza Ortigas, San Miguel Avenue, Pasig City

GOLFERS CLUB SHARES, INC.
SEC LICENSE # A 1998-2129
AS OF MARCH 18, 2002

	SELLING	BUYING
1. ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "A"	1,750,000	1,700,000
2. ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "B"	1,850,000	
3. BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	725,000	700,000
4. CALATAGAN GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	100,000	80,000
5. CAMP JOHN HAY	300,000	250,000
6. CANLUBANG GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	600,000	
7. CAPITOL HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	125,000	115,000
8. CELEBRITY CLUB	180,000	
9. COUNTRY CLUB AT TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS	380,000	370,000
10. CLUB FILIPINO	210,000	200,000
11. EASTRIDGE GOLF CLUB "A"	200,000	
12. EAGLERIDGE GOLF CLUB "A"	340,000	
13. EVERCREST GOLF CLUB "A"	100,000	
14. FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	220,000	
15. FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	280,000	
16. FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	500,000	
17. MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "A"	280,000	260,000
18. MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "B"	400,000	
19. MANILA GOLF CLUB (IND.)	11,000,000	
20. MANILA POLO CLUB	2,600,000	2,650,000
21. MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "A"	650,000	600,000
22. MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "B"	750,000	700,000
23. METROPOLITAN CLUB "A"	140,000	
24. METROPOLITAN CLUB "B"	150,000	
25. MT. MALARAYAT GOLF CLUB (IND.)	400,000	330,000
26. ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	230,000	200,000
27. ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	300,000	250,000
28. ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	370,000	
29. QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB	220,000	200,000
30. RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	200,000	
31. RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	260,000	230,000
32. STA. ELENA GOLF CLUB "A"		1,700,000
33. SUBIC BAY YACHT CLUB (IND)	260,000	
34. TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS INT'L. GOLF CLUB		850,000
35. TAGAYTAY MIDLAND		750,000
36. VALLE VERDE COUNTRY CLUB	170,000	
37. VALLEY GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	240,000	200,000
38. WACK WACK GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB		6,500,000

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Gov't sees compromise on vehicle imports row

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE BUREAU of Customs and the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority have agreed to adopt a more transparent system on assessing used-vehicle imports as part of a "win-win" solution to the dispute between assemblers and traders.

Commissioner Antonio Bernardo said the government recognized the contribution of auctioneers to the national economy but it also recognized the need for a clear valuation system. He said that the importers should abide with the World Trade Organization rules that tariffs be based on transaction value.

Bernardo led members of a government-private task force which made an ocular inspection of the operations of auctioneers last Saturday. The task force included Federation of Philippine Industries chair Raul T. Concepcion and Makati Business Club executive director Guillermo Luz.

Luz said the government, must set a benchmark and objective norm in the valuation of imports and payment of taxes.

SBMA Chair Felicito Payumo said the SBMA and the task force have agreed to drop their "all or nothing" stand in the negotiations as he hinted of a possible compromise that would allow the continued operations of vehicle importers while addressing the concerns of assemblers.

The proliferation of traders of imported second-hand vehicles has drawn the ire of Japanese and American assemblers which have questioned the used imports' roadworthiness, compliance with emission standards and payment of taxes and duties.

Bernardo said the auction of imported vehicles was not illegal as it was a mere marketing tool to entice buyers. He said there was a "misperception" on the industry because of the low prices of the used vehicles.

Motor Vehicles Importers Association of Subic Bay Freeport Inc. (MVIA) president Eddie Barretto said auctioneers could afford to sell the used vehicles at very low prices because they do away with the marketing and distribution route composed of importers, dealers, retailers and agents which accounted for 55 percent of a vehicle's sale price.

He said their business provided transportation to farmers, fish and vegetable dealers, haulers, small contractors, and other low-income professionals who could not afford brand new units.

Firm to upgrade Luzon power line

By Ronnel W. Domingo

NATIONAL Transmission Corp., which was spun off from National Power Corp., expects to complete the "uprating" of the San Jose-Tayabas Line 2 at 500 kilovolts from 230 kv early next month as part of efforts to prevent another Luzon-wide blackout.

Documents obtained by reporters show that Transco is implementing a plan to improve the reliability of its system, specially the transmission lines south of Metro Manila.

Energy officials have noted that, compared with other transmission lines, those passing through Laguna often trip due to the stealing of cables and faults in the system.

Under the plan, the connections of the Kalayaan-Tabayas-San Jose line will be completed and "uprated" to 500kv.

Transco also intends to:

- Increase the lines used during holidays and weekends when the electricity load is low;
- Complete the upgrade of the National Control Center by end of this year, and
- Put up more lines passing through Kalayaan in Laguna by end-2004.

Meantime, Napocor has yet to make public its findings on what caused the Luzon-wide blackout in January.

Napocor officer-in-charge Roland S. Quilala said last week that the findings were "still subject to further confirmation."

91-day T-bill . . .

From page B1

182-day bills at a yield of 6.175 percent.

Officials and traders said they expected banks to snap up all of the offerings in the tap facility because banks have nowhere else to put their excess funds, as indicated by the volume of tenders submitted in the earlier auctions.

At the auction of 91-day bills, banks submitted total tenders of P8.82 billion for the P1.5 billion on offer while they submitted total tenders of P7.02 billion for 182-day bills for the P1.5 billion on offer.

One trader said he expected banks to lower the rates on short-term loans to reflect the big drop in treasury bill yields.

"I think it will definitely force banks to lower their rates. But what remains to be seen is how it will impact the longer-term rates," said one money market trader.

The same trader said banks currently charge rates of 8.5-12 percent for corporate loans with a maturity of one month.

Camacho said it was too soon for the government to review its interest rate targets for the year.

"The question is sustainability. The longer-dated maturities have not moved as quickly as the short-dated maturities. I think if we can see consistent and sustainable drop in rates at both ends of the curve, then it might be worthwhile reviewing interest rate targets for the year," Camacho told reporters.

The government is targeting an average domestic interest rate of between 11 and 12 percent this year. *With a report from Reuters*

2-month . . .

From page B1

been pushing investors away again, as reflected by the initial numbers for March, the official pointed out.

Last year, the country recorded a net portfolio inflow of $68.7 million, representing a sharp turnaround from a net outflow of $149 million in 2000.

Hot money inflow last year was strongest during the months of January, June, September and December while outflow was highest from February to May.

The central bank data came from Citibank N.A., Standard Chartered Bank, Deutsche Bank, HSBC and ING Barings. The five foreign banks account for 96 percent of total foreign fund flows.

More than portfolio funds, the central bank was counting on the inflow from direct foreign investments to help beef up the country's dollar reserved that stood at a high of $16.2 billion as of end-February.

The BSP said direct investments of $540 million from Japanese brewer Kirin to San Miguel Corp. and $200 million from Coca Cola to RFM Corp. (for the sale of Cosmos) should help the central bank maintain the level of reserves above the psychological level of $14 billion this year.

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As of March 19, 2002

	BUYING	SELLING
ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB A/B*	1.65M/1.7M *	-
ALTA VISTA A/B*	-	300,000/350,000 *
BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	725,000	750,000
CALATAGAN GOLF CLUB A/B*	75,000	95,000/105,000 *
CAMP JOHN HAY	265,000	300,000
CANLUBANG	500,000	600,000
CAPITOL HILLS	125,000	-
CELEBRITY SPORTS CLUB	-	190,000
EAGLE RIDGE A/B*/C**	620,000	350,000/450,000/700,000 **
EVERCREST A/B*	135,000 *	100,000
FONTANA D/C*/B**	-	90,000/150,000/1280,000 **
FOREST HILLS A/B*/C**	200,000	230,000/300,000/325,000 **
MAKATI SPORTS A/B*	270,000	275,000/325,000 *
MANILA POLO CLUB	2.55 M	2,750,000
MANILA SOUTHWOODS A/B*	630,000/730,000 *	700,000/750,000 *
METROPOLITAN A/B*	-	120,000/125,000 *
MIMOSA IND./C2*	120,000/200,000 *	185,000/255,000 *
MT. MALARAYAT A/C*	350,000/500,000 *	400,000/525,000 *
ORCHARD A/B*/C**	200,000	230,000/350,000/1425,000 **
PUERTO AZUL A	115,000	150,000
QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB	200,000	225,000
RIVIERA A/B*	-	195,000/400,000 *
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ROYALE TAGAYTAY A/B*/C**	-	110,000/150,000/180,000 **
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STA. ELENA GOLF CLUB A/B*	1.8M/1.9M *	1,050,000/Pls call
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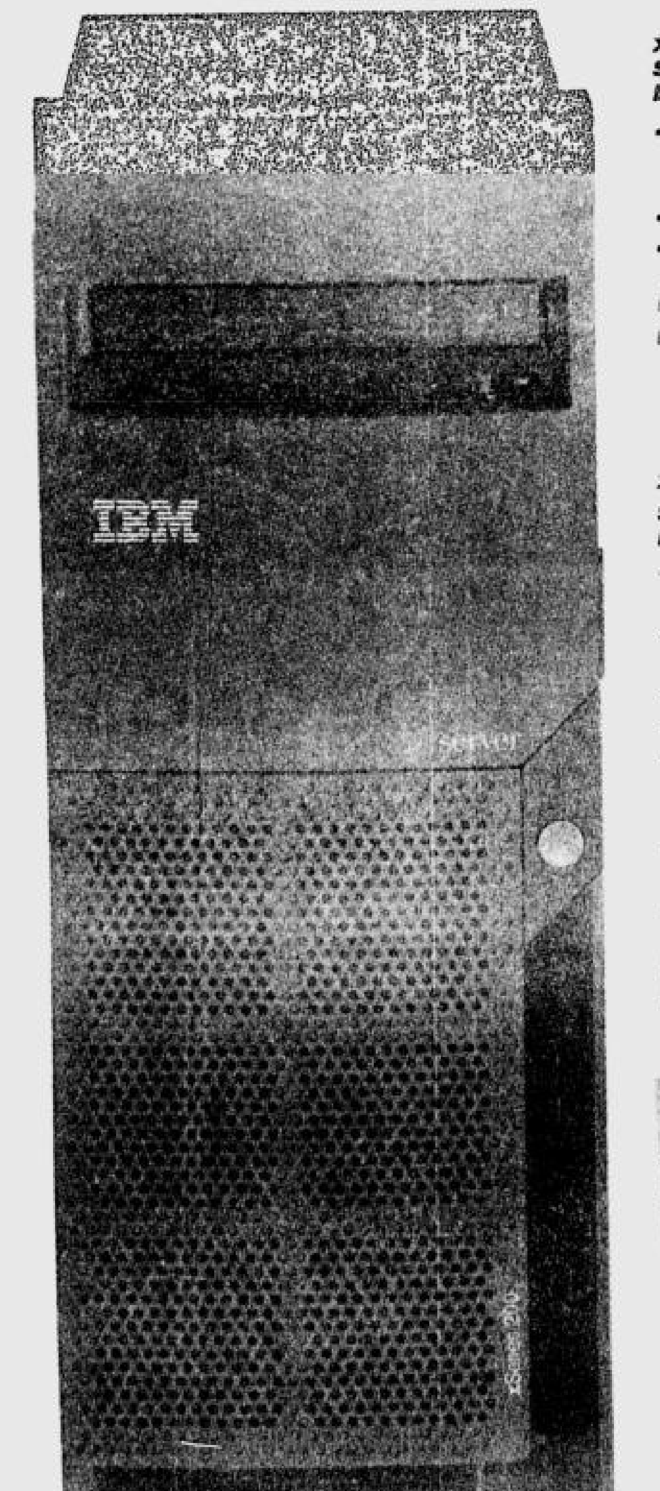

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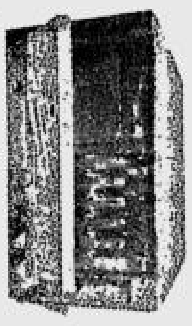

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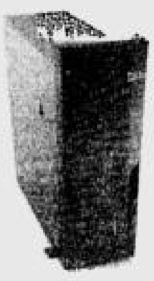

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Asia starts getting serious about privatization

TOKYO—Privatization is belatedly gathering pace in Asia, offering opportunities for investors regaining an appetite for risk, but fancy political footwork will be needed to turn what is now a ripple into a wave.

Skeptics say they have heard the story before and remain to be convinced that governments are ready to take on powerful vested interests and translate fine intentions into practice.

Even optimists concede that, with the notable exception of South Korea, progress is maddeningly slow.

Still, nearly five years after Asia's financial crisis saddled governments with huge debts and added an array of failed banks and firms to an already bloated inventory of state-owned assets, they say the news flow is turning positive.

From India to Indonesia, Bangkok to Beijing, governments are responding to pressure to plug holes in their budgets by putting more assets on the block.

Investors are getting the chance to buy into everything from Thai tobacco and Indian aluminum to Korea's power sector and the company building China's Three Gorges Dam, the largest hydroelectric project on the planet.

Last week, Indonesia announced that San Francisco-based Farallon Capital Management won the bidding for the country's largest retail bank, PT Bank Central Asia. The sale had been viewed by international lenders and foreign investors as a litmus test of Jakarta's commitment to reform.

"The general trend is positive although it still has a long way to go," said Christine Wallich, who heads the Manila-based Asian Development Bank's private-sector operations.

She said restructuring loss-making utilities in preparation for even partial privatization was a 10-year haul, and many countries were only a third or, at most, half of the way there.

"So I would see the glass as slightly more than half-full rather than half-empty but needing a lot more political impetus and possibly also more imagination with respect to how privatizations take place," Wallich told Reuters.

Korea's acceptance of privatization and reform reflects a struggle to improve its underlying economic performance since the 1997 crisis shook faith in a growth model that relied heavily on state ownership and direction.

But it is the inexorable rise in debt levels, which sow the seeds of financial instability and leave little room for pump-priming when growth falters, that is renewing the interest of other governments in denationalisation.

"The underlying theme is that people recognize that the private sector is probably better at managing most of these assets that are being offloaded, but what is making that theme come to life now is strains on the public finances," said Tim Condon, chief economist at ING Barings in Hong Kong.

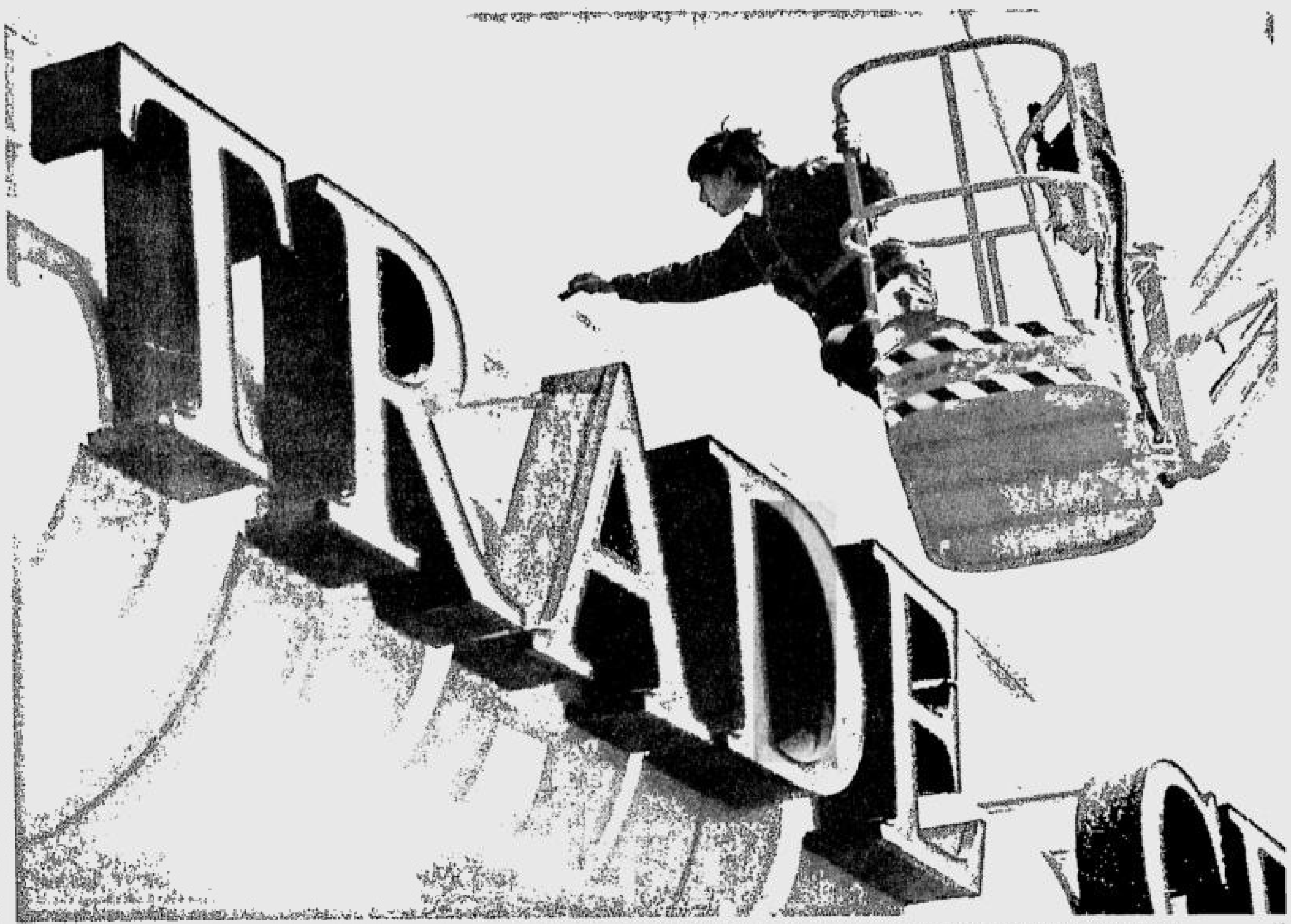
Since 1996, Thailand's public-sector debt has jumped to 57 percent from 16 percent; the Philippines' to 90 percent from 53 percent; and Indonesia's to 100 percent from 27 percent.

Privatization can only be part of the solution to such deep-seated imbalances, but some analysts see signs that Asia is also slotting other pieces of the good-policy jigsaw into place.

In a review released earlier this month, Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade said many economies were enacting reforms that should eventually deliver a business environment based on predictable rules instead of cronyism and family ties.

Adam Le Mesurier, an economist at Goldman Sachs in Singapore, said macro-economic policy management was also improving. Thus, last year's economic downturn in Asia was milder than it might have been because most countries have now adopted flexible exchange rate regimes, allowing them to support demand by letting their currencies ease and real interest rates fall, he argued.

Southeast Asia's problems will not fade overnight, but Le Mesurier said the region could be on the cusp of trading in the vicious circle of political woes, capital flight and monetary instability it has known for the past five years for a virtuous cycle that would lure back foreign direct investment. *Reuters*



A CHINESE worker cleans the roof of an underpass leading to the World Trade Center in Beijing. As China's World Trade Organization membership grants it more trading partners and greater access to foreign markets, it also has to manage mass unemployment in its farming sector, which is unable to compete with foreign producers. AP

Details of UN poverty summit already set in stone

MONTERREY, Mexico—Dozens of world leaders were gathering in northern Mexico on Monday to discuss how to channel more money to help eradicate poverty among the world's most miserable.

But the final document that will be signed Friday by at least 59 heads of state, including US President George W. Bush, is already set in stone.

So it was unclear what exactly the dozens of presidents, prime ministers, finance ministers and foreign ministers expected to accomplish this week at the UN International Conference on Financing for Development, which culminates in a presidential summit Thursday and Friday.

At best, said Ruth Jacoby, the Swedish ambassador to the United Nations who co-chaired the two-year preparations for the summit, "a couple of ministers will probably have spent a couple of hours thinking about things they don't normally think about."

The official goals of the participating nations are a bit more lofty. They aim to improve the lives of the 1 billion people who live on less than $1 a day by preventing financial crises and helping poor countries to manage their debt.

"Their goal is to eradicate poverty, achieve sustained economic growth and promote sustainable development as they advance to a fully inclusive and equitable global economic system," according to a UN press release.

Nobody believes the summit will achieve that, and some are angry at what they call an attempt by leaders of developed nations to pretend to address problems they have no intention of solving.

Anti-globalization activists claiming that the conference is a sham have planned several marches, prompting Mexico to send 3,500 soldiers and police to Monterrey to keep peace.

Yet in a way, the summit is a start at what the protesters are demanding: World leaders are discussing how to help poor nations become richer, and how to reduce the glaring divide between the world's haves and have-nots.

Still, aid organizations and others say the summit's final document does not address the root causes of poverty and doesn't force rich nations to commit money to help the poor.

Meeting in Monterrey before the summit, a group of activists declared Saturday that the final document, called the "Monterrey Consensus," is insincere public relations. They called for a complete overhaul of the international finance system and for the removal on conditions for aid from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. *AP*

Next WTO head seeks fund to restructure steel industry

BERLIN—The incoming head of the WTO has called for a global fund to be set up to restructure the steel industry in developing countries, in an interview due to be published on Monday.

Supachai Panitchpakdi said that having the WTO arbitrate in the storm which followed the US announcement that it would introduce tariffs on steel imports from this Wednesday, would not be enough to solve the industry's global problems.

Multilateral agreements to reduce overcapacity in the industry are needed, Panitchpakdi, who is a former Thai commerce minister, told the Financial Times Deut-schland.

"Developed countries, members of the WTO will themselves have to pay the cost of the reconversion and retraining of workers who will be laid off.

"But I also propose a global fund which will take care of the costs of restructuring in poor countries," he said.

Panitchpakdi is due to take over as director general of the World Trade Organization from Mike Moore in September. *AFP*

McDonald's set to close 130 stores

TOKYO—McDonald's Co. (Japan) Ltd. said Monday that it would shut a record 130 stores this year and cut the number of new burger bars planned by 23 percent as recession forced large shopping complexes to close.

"A lot of our restaurants are located inside big shopping malls and department stores, but many of them have been forced to close down so the environment is not favorable for us," said Kenji Kaniya, a spokesperson for Japan's version of the US fast food chain.

"The market potential for us is difficult so we have been forced to relocate many outlets," he said.

The number of new restaurants planned for 2002 would slip 22.8 percent from the previous year to 220 stores, said Kaniya, as McDonald's rapid expansion enjoyed in the land of fish and rice since 1971, appeared to loose steam.

McDonald's had opened between 300 and 500 branches annually from 1995 to 2000. *AFP*

Singapore's unseen poor barely surviving

SINGAPORE—Ah Loh almost makes ends meet by carrying coffins and hauling fish.

On a good month, the Singaporean widower takes home S$400 ($220) to his four young children, a pittance in a country where the average household income is nearly S$5,000.

"Lately, there's been less work," said 35-year-old Ah Loh, known only by his nickname. "Before, it was $500 to $700. Now, the economy's bad."

His plight is a far cry from the images of glittering shopping malls, scrumptious restaurants and scrupulously clean streets that most visitors see of wealthy Singapore.

He has a rented roof over his head. His elderly mother cares for the children in her own cramped, squalid apartment. Public donations pay for the children's education.

Like others in similar straits, there are no unemployment checks for Ah Loh in the city state of 4 million where the jobless rate has hit its highest in 15 years. Ah Loh has to survive on his own.

"If there were people helping, it would be better. Without help, the pressures are high," Ah Loh said in Hokkien, the most common Chinese dialect spoken in Singapore.

Singapore's government has long-rejected the notion of a welfare state, preferring short-term incentives to those in need to avoid building a reliance on government handouts.

Families shoulder part of the responsibility, and more than 260 private welfare organizations take up the slack, some with the aid of public money.

But Singapore's do-it-yourself mentality is facing its toughest test to date as the economy experiences its worst recession in 40 years, raising questions about the extent to which the government should go to help those in need.

A rapidly aging population raises longer-term issues about pressures building on the welfare state.

"The Asian economic boom helped to postpone the need to have government giving more direct welfare paychecks," said associate professor Ngiam Tee Liang, head of the National University of Singapore's social work and psychology department.

"This is a new phase we're entering. How can the government provide for the safety net of people when the economic pillar is not strong and the family and community pillar is also getting weakened?"

Aware of a rising call for help as thousands lose their jobs, the state decentralized and delegated social service functions last April to several Community Development Councils to try to identify those in need sooner.

It introduced short-term cash schemes, in the hundreds of dollars, but emphasized that Singaporeans would have to stand on their own feet.

"It's lending a hand to help Singaporeans in need, not to weaken their spirit to help themselves," Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong said. *Reuters*

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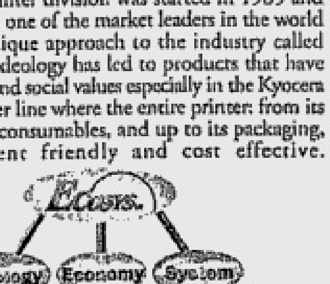

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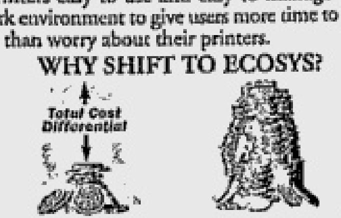

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INVITATION TO SELL PROPERTIES

The National Housing Authority (NHA) is inviting landowners to offer properties within Iloilo City and its periphery for acquisition by NHA to be used for resettlement purposes.

The properties offered should be classified as "Residential" located within 20 kilometers radius of the Iloilo City Central Business District with area of 5-10 hectares, access road or right of way, access to water and power sources and should not require extensive filling.

Offers to sell land shall contain the following documents:

1. Letter of Intent to Sell Land
2. Copy of TCT (Certified by the Registry of Deeds)
3. Copy of Tax Declaration issued by the Assessor's Office
4. Latest Tax Receipts and Tax Clearance
5. Vicinity/Location Map and Lot Plan prepared by a Geodetic Engineer
6. Topographic Map (if available)

All proposals shall be addressed to the Chairman, Committee on Land Acquisition, 3rd Floor, NHA Main Building, Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City either through:

The Project Manager
NHA - Iloilo Project Office
Diversion Road, Brgy Bakhaw
Mandurriao, Iloilo City
Tel. Nos. 3212665 / 5080542

The Manager
Visayas Management Office
National Housing Authority
Elliptical Road, Diliman, Q.C.
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(PDI--March 16 & 19, 2002)

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PUBLIC NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

Notice is hereby given that the property of late PLACIDA V. VALBUENA is being settled extrajudicially by an affidavit of self-adjudication by the sole heir as per Doc. No. 106, Page No. 22, Book No. VI Series of 2002 of Quezon City before Notary Public ATTY. ANTONIO G. DORONILA
PDI-March 12,19&26, 2002

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PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late REMEDIOS DEL BARRIO CUEVA who died on December 22, 1998 was extrajudicially settled by the sole heir as per Doc No. 425, Page No. 86, Book No. XI, Series of 2002 Before Pasig City Notary Public of Atty. Arsenia N Veloso.
(PDI- Mar. 12, 19, & 26 2002)

PERSONAL

Thank You Holy Spirit -SMC

NOVENA TO THE MOST SACRED HEART OF JESUS AND SAINT JUDE

May the most Sacred Heart of Jesus be praised, blessed, loved, adored and glorified throughout the whole world now and forever. Amen.

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus Pray for us.

St. Jude, worker of miracles helper for the helpless, pray for us.

Say nine times a day for nine days. Prayer will be answered by the eighth day, it has never failed.

Thank you very much, Most Sacred Heart of Jesus and St. Jude for favor granted.

INQUIRER
TRiViA
By BONG BARRAMEDA

Whiter shade of white

Q. How do detergents make white clothes whiter?

A. Most white fabrics turn gradually yellow with age. To fight this natural process, many detergents contain what manufacturers call optical and chemical bleaches. Optical bleaches, also known as fabric brighteners or fluorescers, work by absorbing invisible ultraviolet light and emitting visible blue light. This counteracts any yellow in the fabric and produces white. In daylight, the light emitted from white fabric washed with optical bleach makes it appear brighter and 'whiter than white.' On the other hand, chemical bleaches brighten your whites by removing stain. This by either adding oxygen or chlorine to the chemicals that make up the stains, or removing oxygen from the stains. These chemical reactions turn many coloring, stain-making agents into colorless chemicals. Of course, laundry detergents usually contain just enough bleach to remove many stains without at the same time removing the dyes from normally color-fast clothes.

Take a Tip. To wash away the stubborn grime of gardening or housework, sprinkle a little sugar on your hands as you lather with soap and water. In fact, a number of skin experts say that you can sweeten your face with sugar, literally, by mixing a teaspoon with soap lather and using the sugar as cleansing grains.

Classified Odd. Frederick the Great, king of Prussia between 1740 and 1786, hated water, rarely washed his hands or face, and almost every morning touched up his cheeks with red paint to make himself appear fresh and healthy.

WORD WATCH

Sabon : Tagalog corruption of the Spanish *jabon*, 'soap.'

PDI -- March 18, 2002

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Members of the Board, Officers and Staff of
Kingpaoguat Typoco Tanyu Internationale (KTTI) Foundation
and
Asiaworld Internationale Group

announce with deep sorrow the passing away
of our beloved Founder

Philanthropist, Entrepreneur, Visionary

TAN YU

who died on 12 March 2002 at 4:45 a.m. in Houston, Texas at the age of 75.

His remains now lie in state in his family residence at 16 Guirayan Street corner Palansa Street, Santa Mesa Heights, Quezon City.

Nightly prayers shall be held at 8:00 p.m., culminating with a Necrological Service at 8:00 p.m. on 21 March 2002 (Thursday) in the residence.

He will be brought to his final resting place in the Family Mausoleum at Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City on 22 March 2002 (Friday) after the 9:30 a.m. Funeral Mass.

LETICIA CORDERO GENEROSO

August 17, 1934 - March 18, 2002

Survived by her loving husband **CESAR**; children **Butch & Ebeng**, **Cesar Jr. & Rosemarie**, **Bembo**, **Paul & Meann**; her grandchildren **Iñigo, Mika, Diane, Camille, Stephanie & Bea**; brothers and sisters **Manay** (†), **Sister Josie** (†), **Boy** (†), **Wing, Ning, Junior, Bucoy** and their families.

Her cremains lie in state at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church.

Interment on Wednesday, March 20, 2002 at the crypt of Mt. Carmel Shrine, following the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

Atty. Ruperto R. Talatala

Joined his Creator on 16 March 2002
at the age of 69.

His family and relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at the Arlington Memorial Chapels, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Cremation will be at La Funeraria Paz, Quezon City on 23 March 2002 after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate ❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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Our Dearly Beloved

Ramon Pozon Perez

of Batangas City

peacefully joined our Lord on March 17, 2002
at the age of 44.

His loving wife **Susan**; children **Erwin, Mikko, Erika** and **Allen**; brothers and sister **Romy** and **Cora, Nito** and **Perla, Juliet** and **Boy Calanog**; parents **Ernesto** (†) and **Corazon**; grandparents **Mayor Roman** (†) and **Manuela Perez** (†); aunts, uncles, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Mortuary, Basilica Inmaculada Concepcion, Batangas City.

Interment will be on March 22, 2002 Friday after the 3:00 p.m. Mass at Eternal Garden, Batangas City.

In Loving Memory

of

Rizalino A. Juliano

whose death anniversary we celebrate today.

We miss him, we love him.

We continue to pray for his eternal happiness.

His loving wife **Ning**;
children and grandchildren
Dinky & Hec, Rocky & Danny,
Jig & Luzette, Winnie, Vic, Wigie, Kareb,
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Marikit, Eliah, Francin.

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Fed Reserve may signal less risk to expansion

WASHINGTON—Rising signs that the US economic recovery may have caught a stronger wave than thought earlier may lead the Federal Reserve this week to shift its concern away from the risk of renewed weakness.

Surging consumer confidence and more business at the nation's factories, coupled with Fed Chair Alan Greenspan's recent declaration that recovery "is well under way," have fueled a feeling the world's largest economy is getting its feet solidly beneath it.

No one expects the policy-setting Federal Open Market Committee to decide on Tuesday to begin raising interest rates. But most big Wall Street dealers in government securities predict policymakers will decide risks now are evenly balanced between weakness and inflation, according to a Reuters poll.

Since late 2000, economic weakness has been the greatest worry for the Fed. But that has changed.

That shift could move the country a step closer to the day when the Fed begins raising the federal funds rate from its current 40-year low of 1.75 percent.

"I don't feel it's a 100-percent certainty" that the risk assessment would be changed, said economist Richard Berner of Morgan Stanley Dean Witter in New York.

"But at the moment, monetary policy has its foot firmly on the gas," he added. "It's perfectly natural to think the Fed will move back to neutral and that's a long way from where it is right now."

Fed policymakers slashed US interest rates 11 times in 2001, trying first to ward off a downturn that ended a record 10-year expansion a year ago, and then to cushion the economic blow from the Sept. 11 attacks.

The stiff tonic appears to be working.

The National Bureau of Economic Research, the elite group that monitored business cycles and declared a recession had begun in March 2000, said last week that it was ending.

And the economic data has begun to pile up showing that a recovery has started. The latest came Friday with a University of Michigan poll that showed a gauge of consumer optimism taken in early March had climbed to 95.0 from 90.7 in February, the highest level since December 2000. *Reuters*

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PEDESTRIANS walk past an electronic stock market board in downtown Tokyo. The Nikkei started moderately higher following Wall Street's gains on Friday but fell 105.26 points, or 0.9 percent, to 11,542.75 at the end of morning trading yesterday. AP

Unemployment plan doesn't help all

WASHINGTON—As many as 4 million people could receive extended unemployment benefits under the economic recovery package signed into law by President George W. Bush. But Anthony Walker, who was laid off by a parking garage in January, will not be one of them.

Walker is among the 43 percent of unemployed workers ineligible for even regular benefits because of what some experts say is a Depression-era system that fails to meet the needs of today's work force.

"In most states, unemployment insurance isn't a true safety net, but a series of gaping holes loosely strung together," said Jeffrey Wenger, a labor economist at the Economic Policy Institute in Washington.

The unemployment insurance program is a federal and state partnership that pays benefits to unemployed workers who have lost jobs through no fault of their own.

Benefits are collected from employers through payroll taxes, and provide partial, temporary replacement of lost wages. States set their own eligibility and benefit levels with federal guidelines. Only two states directly tax workers.

Walker mistakenly thought he would get financial help when he was let go.

"I didn't ask to be laid off," said Walker. He held a $7.15 an hour job at a Silver Spring, Md., parking garage.

But he did not qualify under the formula most states use to determine eligibility and benefit levels. The first four of the last five completed calendar quarters are counted, and a worker must be employed for at least two quarters during that time and wages must meet a certain level.

The unemployment office said Walker was not employed at the garage for two full quarters during the eligibility period.

"Why am I being penalized?" he said. "I did not quit. I did not get fired."

Although the yearlong recession is over and companies started adding employees again last month for the first time in seven months, people looking for work should not count on immediate relief.

Even with the unemployment rate dropping to 5.5 percent last month, jobs are not plentiful yet. *AP*

Mega-IPO deals seen benefiting owners

NEW YORK—This week's mega-IPOs have people wondering whether what's good for the parent is good for the offspring.

Travelers Property Casualty Corp., the Citigroup insurance unit, plans to sell 210 million shares at $16 to $19 each, raising $3.68 billion—and $850 million of convertible debt. Alcon Inc., the eye-care business of Swiss food giant Nestlé SA, plans to sell 69.8 million shares at $31 to $35, raising $2.3 billion.

Travelers and Alcon have highly regarded brands, stable, growing businesses—and sophisticated corporate owners for whom the IPOs are part of a broader strategic plan. That means the IPO investors may not be getting the better part of the deal.

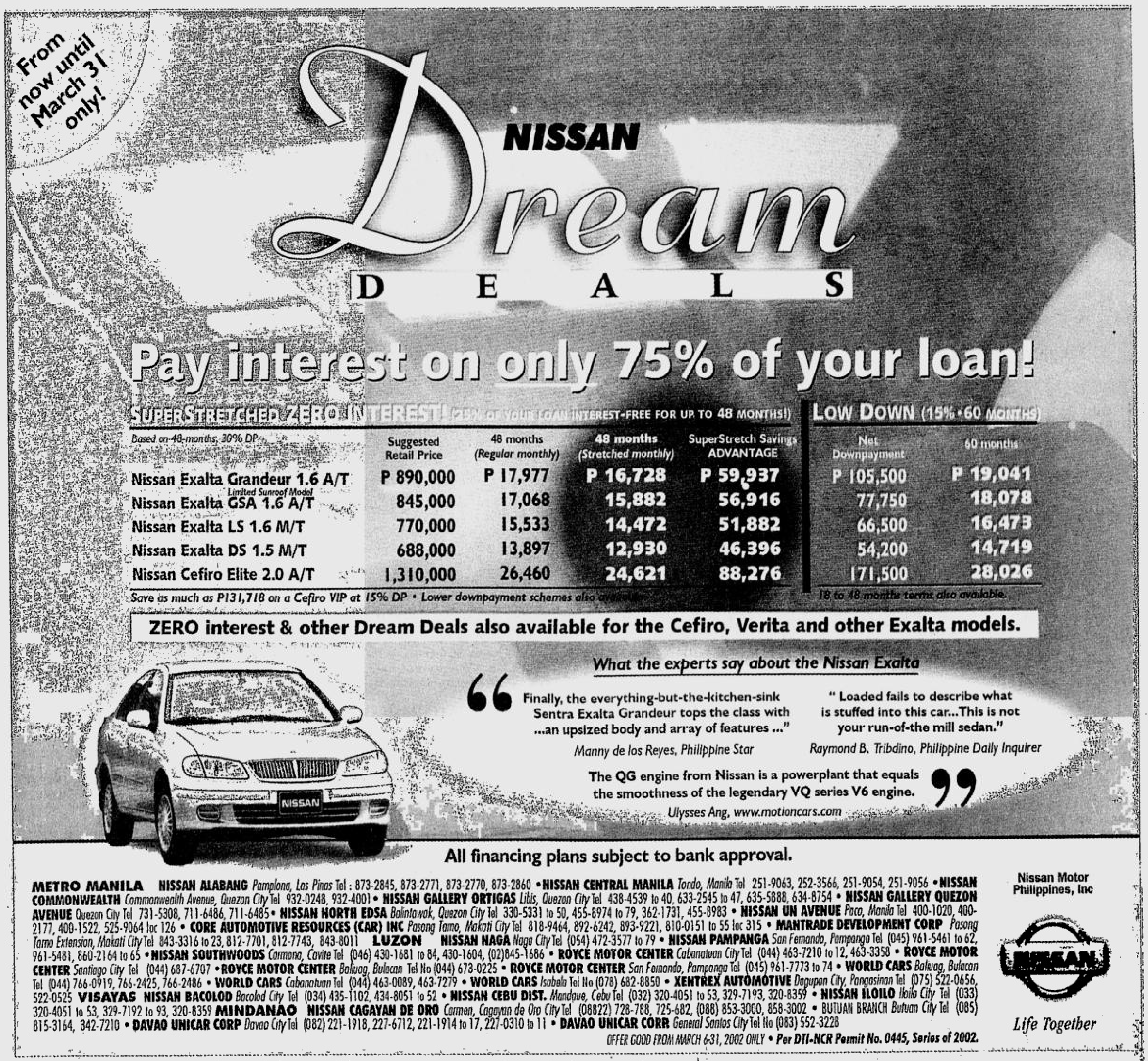
"You're buying from (Citigroup CEO) Sandy Weill, who is selling," said David Klaskin, chair and chief investment officer of Chicago-based Oak Ridge Investments, which has $950 million of stocks. "Sandy is very, very smart, and if he thought this was extremely cheap, I don't think he'd be spinning it off."

Indeed, Travelers' profits have failed to keep pace with Citigroup's ambitious growth targets.

"As Sandy Weill has put it, the growth rates are too slow, and the return on equity is too low, (for Travelers) to fit in with the rest of Citigroup," said Ira Zuckerman, an insurance analyst with Nutmeg Securities in Fairfield, Connecticut. "By jettisoning this, he can enhance the value of the rest of the company."

Both Travelers and Alcon are "carve-outs," which refer to the partial sale to the public of a company division through an IPO. Last year, US-registered carve-outs accounted for 50 percent of US-registered IPO dollar volume, according to John Brand, an IPO analyst with research firm Dealogic.

So far this year, the proportion has been 20 percent but will rise to about 71 percent once Travelers and Alcon come to market, he says. In each case, proceeds from the IPOs, which are the biggest so far this year, will fill the coffers not of the parent but the newly public company instead. *Reuters*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Manny de los Reyes, Philippine Star

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Editor **Cesar D. Mangawang**

Construction sector to grow by 4.4% this year, says DTI

By Tessa R. Salazar

THE CONSTRUCTION industry is projected to grow by 4.4 percent this year.

This was stressed by Trade and Industry Undersecretary Thomas G. Aquino before foreign investors during the opening of the Philippine World Building and Construction Exposition on Wednesday.

The expo was also graced by Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council Chair Mike Defensor; Sen. Francis Pangilinan and Rep. Miguel Zubiri; who respectively head the Senate and House committee on housing and urban development; and Margie Moran-Floirendo, who represents the Habitat for Humanity.

The expo, one of Asia's biggest building and construction event, was also attended by delegates from 23 participating countries including the United States, Korea, China, Malaysia, Taiwan, France, Singapore, Australia, Germany, United kingdom, Italy, Finland, India and the Philippines.

P100-B mark

Investment, said Aquino, is expected to exceed the P100-billion mark in 2002.

"The Philippines must be strategically perched to capture economic opportunities back and potentially increase levels of income to generate employment," he said.

The trade department has identified the construction material sector as one of the 10 priority trade and investment areas.

Plan

Part of the plan is to craft a strategic business plan that is responsive to the needs of the construction industry and effective in positioning the local players in a global market place, he said. The functioning units of the DTI, he added, will support the implementation of the business plans and the realization of the construction industry's goals and objectives.

"The plan will also ensure promotional efforts geared to positioning the country as a viable sourcing hub for construction materials," he said.

Aquino said the DTI welcomes international trade shows for the construction industry as this would help bolster the sector's visibility and credibility.

33 infra projects

The construction industry has much to look forward to, he said, as the government has identified 33 infrastructure projects that will make tourist destinations around the country more accessible.

The infrastructure projects, which fall under the build operate transfer (BOT) partnership projects between the government and the private sector, are positive indications that the industry is back on track, he said.

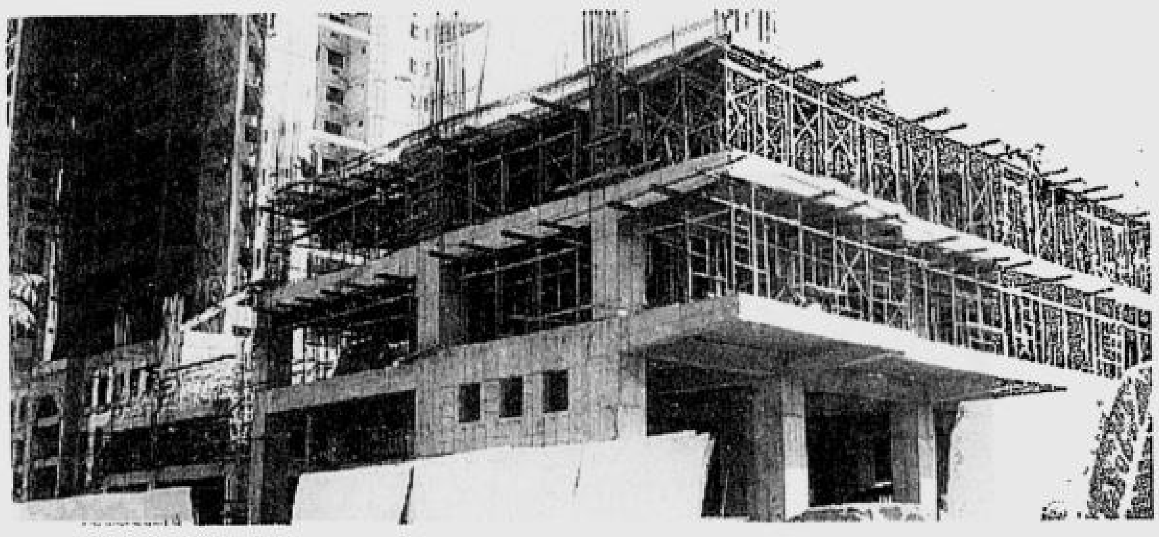
Support

Joseph Ang, founding chair of Worldbex Services International, the event's organizer, said Worldbex got the support from the US Commercial Service and the European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines.

Embassies and trade offices that have participated include Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Korea, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Thailand, Netherlands, Romania and New Zealand. The trade exhibition ended Sunday.

PUYAT STEEL CORPORATION
RACT SIGNING

SUPPLY AGREEMENT
Puyat Steel Corp., manufacturer of APO Galfan, and Villa Tanza Development Corp. recently signed an agreement for the exclusive supply of Apo Galfan color roofing materials to Villa Tanza. Apo Galfan products exhibit excellent formability, superior corrosion resistance (with 95 percent zinc and 5 percent aluminum, superior paintability and weldability. Forging the business partnership are Villa Tanza owner Anthony Que and general manager Lysias Cabusao and PSC vice president and general manager Salvio D. Perez.



CONSTRUCTION IN FULL SWING
Premier urban property developer Megaworld Corp. has finished the construction of the three basement levels of its twin-tower luxury residential condominium, The Eastwood Excelsior, at Eastwood City in Libis Quezon City. Structural work on Towers 1 and 2 is proceeding at the fourth and fifth floors, respectively. Megaworld's marketing arm for The Eastwood Excelsior, Eastwood Property Holdings Inc., has announced that the 29-story Tower 1 and 33-story Tower 2, launched in October 2000 and January 2001, respectively, are now almost 100 percent taken up.

New rules on housing permits lauded

THE PRIVATE Sector Consultative Council for Shelter has welcomed the issuance of new rules that could facilitate the grant of development permits and locational clearances for housing subdivision projects from cities and municipalities.

The PCCS is the unified advocacy and consultative body for housing composed of the National Real Estate Association; Builders Toward Action in Shelter; Women in Shelter and Its Environment; Organization of Socialized Housing Developers of the Philippines; Chamber of Real Estate and Builders Association; and the Subdivision and Housing Developers Association.

The implementing guidelines, recently issued by the Department of Interior and Local Government, provide that the development permits and locational clearances for subdivision projects shall be issued within 30 days from receipt by the secretary of the city or municipal "sanggunian" (council) of all completed applications including the other requirements of concerned national agencies, said PCCS chair Romeo Thaddeus Liamzon.

He said the issuance by all government departments and agencies of time periods in the processing of housing-related permits and clearances is part of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's commitment to boost housing production by cutting the start-up period for a housing project, from two years to 90 days; and reducing the number of required signatories thereon from 188 to 44.

The PCCS welcomes the guidelines as an incentive in the production of low-cost and economic housing, consistent with the concepts of good governance, transparency and accountability of the Macapagal administration, Liamzon pointed out.

Creba's stand on land use

By Florentino S. Dulalia Jr.
Contributor

THE CHAMBER of Real Estate and Builders Association (Creba) has always made a firm and unequivocal stand on equitable and democratic allocation of land for housing and urban development. Designations and allocations must be well studied, well planned and well coordinated so that the different sectors of the economy—specifically industrial, residential, tourism and infrastructure—can use land effectively for growth and productivity.

This is the essence of Section 34, Chapter VII of the proposed Omnibus Housing and Urban Development Act, subtitled Designation and Use of Lands for Housing and Development Purposes.

Provisions

The provisions that are embodied here aim to make millions of Filipinos legal owners of real estate properties—definitely a way of resolving the age-old problem of poverty and lack of shelter security.

One provision of the bill is that local governments whose localities do not meet the population density requirement of at least 500 persons per square meter may reclassify agricultural lands for residential, commercial and other urban development purposes according to corresponding zoning ordinances. In case of fourth to sixth class municipalities, however, reclassification shall not affect lands duly awarded under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program or CARP.

Relative to this, the bill also provides that whether or not irrigated or arable, tenanted or untenanted, no notice of coverage under the CARP, notice of acquisition, notice of valuation, or any similar instruments of the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) shall be used to cover the following: 1) lands designated for housing and urban development; 2) lands zoned prior to or after the effectivity of Republic Act 6657 for residential, commercial, industrial or other urban development purposes under local zoning ordinances duly approved by the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board; and, 3) areas specifically listed as eco-zones under RA 7916.

To maximize land use, however, the bill also states that lands designated for housing and urban development may be used for short gestating agricultural production activities in the meantime that they await actual development or use, provided that any arrangement to this effect shall not be subject to provisions of agrarian reform laws.

A message from HUDCC

The Housing and Urban Development Coordination Council or HUDCC sent a message to the industry during Creba's February business meeting and 29th induction ceremony that housing will continue to move not only to meet the country's economic needs but also to improve its social and political situation. A comprehensive action program covers housing production, especially for the poor, finance, regulation and institutional development.

Continuing consultations with the various stakeholders will also be undertaken to foster unity in pursuing priorities. Lawyer Romero Federico S. Quimbo, officer-in-charge, EVP and DCEO of Home Development Mutual Fund, spoke in behalf of Secretary Mike Defensor who attended the event but had to leave early for an important legislative matter, yes, on housing.

During the event, a memorandum of agreement was signed between the HUDCC and Creba formalizing a scheme of cooperation and collaboration in their joint effort to pursue an effective and sustainable government housing program, particularly for the benefit of the socialized and low-income beneficiaries.

(Dulalia is the national president of Creba)

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Helpful hints for worry-free vacation

IT'S the season of Lent once again. This means long vacation for the much-needed spiritual retreat and visit to the provinces. While you are snug about this break, with your entire family tagging along with you, can you feel the same for your house? You surely can't leave it without a reliable guard.

Sequtech Corp. is offering a solution with PowerMax, a security system that is guaranteed to give you peace of mind.

Made by Tel Aviv based Visionic Ltd., Israel's leading manufacturer of reliable and high-tech security systems, PowerMax has all the features that can keep your house in one piece. It combines security, home automation and communication in a wireless setup. It boasts of advanced features such as the ability to send an alarm to the user or village security in case of intrusion or emergency.

The user may also remotely program the system such as to order it to switch on the lights when nobody's home. Outsiders therefore will get the impression that there's somebody in the house even if it's empty.

PowerMax is perfect not just for homes, but offices as well. That's really worry-free vacation and you can have all the time to immerse in complete meditation.

MALL CINEMA OPENING
Cuevasville Plaza (FRC Mall) recently opened to the public its state-of-the-art cinemas. Shown are Cavite Gov. Ireneo Malixi, far right, and former Oriental Mindoro Gov. Renato Valencia and his wife, far left. Also shown are Cuevasville chair Felimon Cuevas and wife Doña Aning, and former Cavite Gov. Ramon "Bong Revilla Jr. and wife Lani Mercado. Cuevasville Plaza is a four-story building that sits on a 32,000 square-meter lot. It is brownout-free, assuring shoppers of nonstop air-conditioning convenience. It also has state-of-the-art cinemas, elevators and escalators.

Palmdale model unit ready for viewing

THE NEW Palmdale Heights site sales office and model unit was recently inaugurated in a simple ceremony attended by the officers and staff of Keppel Philippines Properties.

The newly opened site sales office serves as an extension center for Palmdale Heights' clients and walk-in guests. The KPP also built a version of a tandem model unit for the clients' better appreciation of the project. The model unit is a fusion of modern and oriental zen with horizontal lines as dominant figures.

Guests were ferried by standby vehicles waiting at the KPP head office in Benguet Centre. Interested buyers now has the choice of either visiting the model unit at the second floor of Benguet Centre or at the project site on Sandoval Avenue, Pasig City.

Private sector lauded for training pest control operators

AGRICULTURE Undersecretary Cesar Drilon, who is also executive director of the Fertilizer and Pesticide Authority, lauded the private sector (Dow AgroSciences in particular) for its critical role in the development of a strong organization of pest control professionals, during the comprehensive training program held recently by Dow AgroSciences for pest control operators (PCOs) at the ACCED Center of the Asian Institute of Management.

Drilon said these PCOs are expected to instill proper values to help enlighten millions of Filipino homeowners nationwide regarding the real issues behind termiticides and how they can properly protect their homes from termite attacks.

He said there is currently no legislation in effect that would penalize inexperienced homeowners from applying termiticides on their own. "In other countries, particularly in the United States, you won't be able to sell your house or have your apartment rented if it doesn't comply with the strict government pest control standards," he explained.

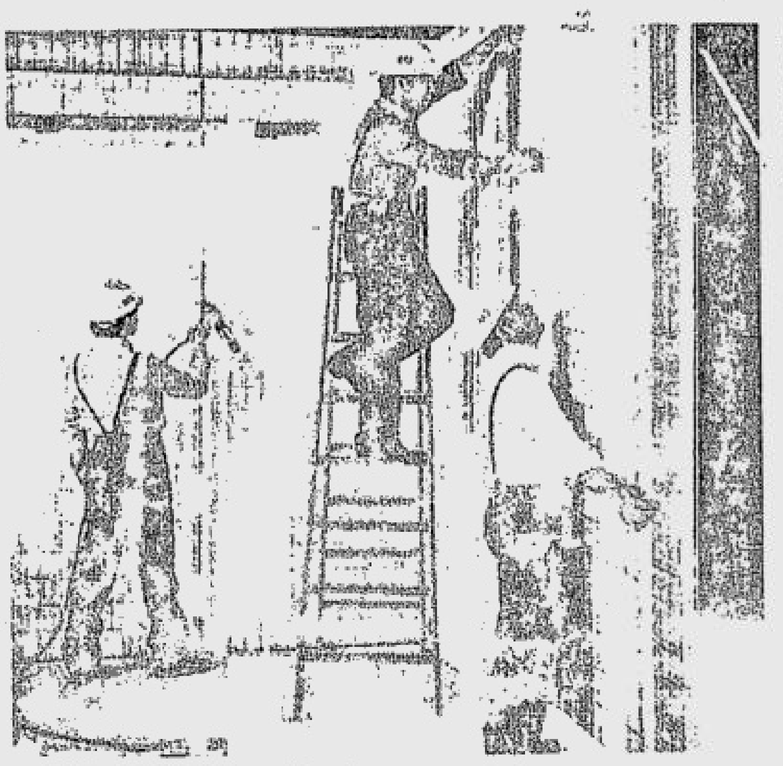
FPA deputy executive director Dario C. Sabularse said the FPA as a regulatory agency welcomes any applications for termite control. However, before it grants registration for these products, they first have to be proven safe, and effective. Tests and product evaluation are conducted regularly by the FPA to check the veracity of pest control manufacturers' claims, thereby protecting consumers from false claims and ensure their safety.

Said Dr. Sabularse: "A good gauge for any termiticide brand is if it is able to protect your properties for up to five years. Dursban (manufactured by Dow AgroSciences), for instance, is a registered termiticide product by the FPA and has passed the FPA's strict evaluation procedures. In our experience, most pest control products that use this substance lasts up to five years, under certain conditions. It is also relatively safer to humans since it is environment-friendly."

Durable construction materials now available in RP market

WITH THE HIGH cost of construction materials, many Filipinos are finding it hard to own a house. Sometimes, even their lifetime savings are not enough to cover the cost of constructing a decent dwelling unit. Thanks to new cost-efficient yet durable materials for housing, units have become more affordable.

But we are not speaking merely of construction of basic housing units in so far as shelter is concerned. The use of M2 panels opens windows to vast potentials and possibilities, especially during these times marked by the rapid growth of complex urban communities. Such possibilities include multistory commercial and residential buildings, hospitals, schools, hotels, factories, warehouses and such other similar structures.



M2 FOR [illegible] .G walls

Unusual building system

The material is M2 building panel, a nonconventional building system made of polystyrene sandwiched by lightweight, prefabricated industrial galvanize wire mesh of high tensile strength for use in single and multistory structures. Reinforced with concrete, the product can be used for external or internal walls, as well as floors, stairs and roofs with high-tensile efficiency and strength.

M2 offers several advantages over conventional housing construction materials, thus a big boom to the government's mass housing program. It cuts down construction and labor cost by as much as 20 percent. This means a lot of savings for the owner. It also reduces completion time by as much as 50 percent and allows for earlier project completion. Installing M2 is easy because of its simple rough-in installation, thus requiring no specialized skill and lifting equipment.

In addition, M2 has precut panels designed to the owner's specifications, allowing for flexibility and freedom of design. It is lightweight, has superior insulation and is soundproofed up to six times that of standard materials. Moreover, it is resistant to fire, rust, termites, molds and mildew.

Versions

M2 comes in four basic versions:

- M2 Single Panel—load-bearing for 2 to 3 stories, for division walls, internal or external facing in new or existing buildings, and special single panels utilized for roof requirements
- M2 Double Panel—ready to cast for load bearing walls, variable internal dimensions (8 cm to 20 cm), and additional internal reinforcement required only for building over 4 stories
- M2 Floor Panel—various designs available for light and commercial loads (850 to 1,200 kg/sq. m) and heavy-duty panels allow integrative steel to be positioned in spaces molded for this purpose
- M2 Stair Panel—lightweight, eliminates costly form works, provides for easy installation of plumbing tubes and electrical wires and precision-cut as to specified length based on the customers' design or requirements

The product has been certified by the government interagency committee for accreditation as a suitable building material for housing. M2 is now available locally through Marathon Building Technologies Inc., which entered into a technology transfer and exclusive licensing agreement with Emmerdue S.r.I. of Italy for the manufacture, marketing and distribution of M2 construction panels.

Aside from multistory buildings and residential houses, M2 is also best for hospitals, schools, factories and warehouses.

Realty consultants elect officers, directors

THE INSTITUTE of Philippine Real Estate Consultants Inc. (Iprec), an affiliate specialized institute of the Philippine Association of Realtors Boards Inc. (Pareb), elected its officers and directors for 2002 during the recent annual general membership meeting held in its offices in New Manila, Quezon City.

Oscar P. Garcia, prominent realtor and industry leader, was elected president. A specialist in commercial realty brokerage and counseling on project packaging, joint venture and development, Garcia is currently board chair of the Philippine Realtors Foundation Inc. (PRFI) after serving as its president. He was former Pareb national president for two terms.

Also elected were Diogenes A. Barredo, vice president; Federico C. Cuervo, secretary; and Adriana M. Macavinta, treasurer.

Elected directors were Meneleo P. Albano, Ernesto C. Ambrosio, Ernesto M. Angeles, Alejandro R. Barcarse, Herbert E. Buot, Ramon P. Tioseco and Zacarias F. Quintin. Immediate past president Rodolfo D. Leonen will sit in the board as ex-officio director.

Upon his election, Garcia appointed former Iprec presidents Geronimo J. Manzano, Ernesto G. Castaneda, Artemio U. Valencia, Gideon F. Benedicto, Victorio V. Soliven, Reynaldo N. Asuncion, Lolita C. Manuel and Amelita E. Sarmiento as members of the board of advisers.

Bureau of Trade Regulation and Consumer Protection director Ma. Teresa A. Mahiwo will swear in the elected officers and directors on March 22 at the Peninsula Manila Hotel. Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Assistant Governor Andres I. Rustia will be the guest speaker during the induction ceremonies.

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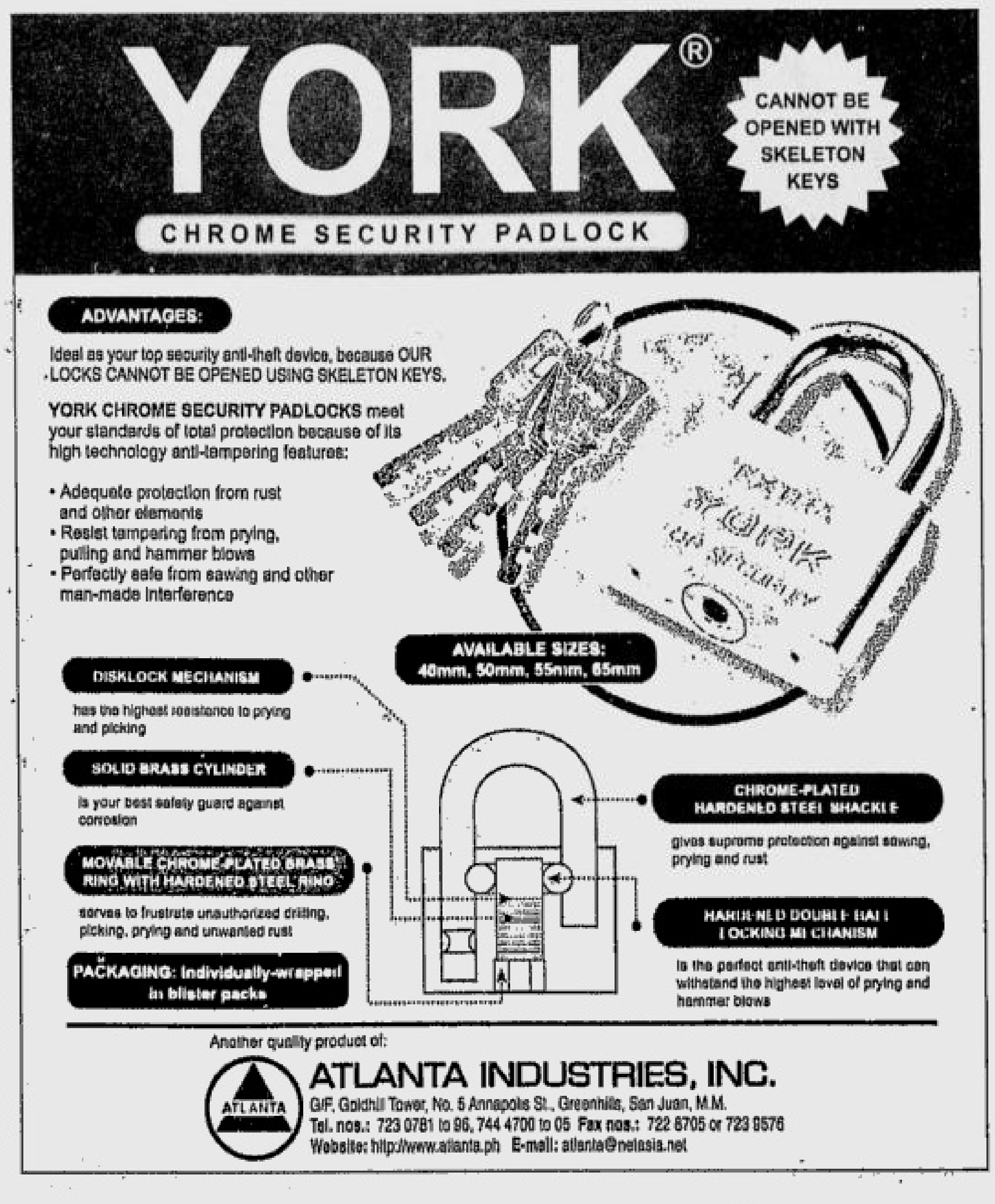
- Use appropriate detergents or tile care products. These include detergent and soap. Several manufacturers have come up with special cleaners for tiles and similar flooring surfaces.
- Avoid using acid-based products that could damage cement-based grouting.
- Avoid using highly abrasive materials such as metal pads. These materials may cause irreparable damage to ceramic tile surfaces.
- Provide doormats at the entrance to prevent sand or powder causing abrasion.
- Prevent heavy objects from dropping on tiled floors. Protect high-risk areas such as those in front of the refrigerator, sink and oven with mats.
- Tiled surfaces must be thoroughly cleaned with soap and water (or other cleaners) at least once a week to keep them beautiful and pleasing to the eye.
- Remove dirt and stains immediately from tiled floors with a damp washcloth.
- For floor and walls of the bathroom, choose tiles that are resistant to acids and alkalis because these surfaces come in contact with chemical and staining agents like perfumes and other cosmetics.



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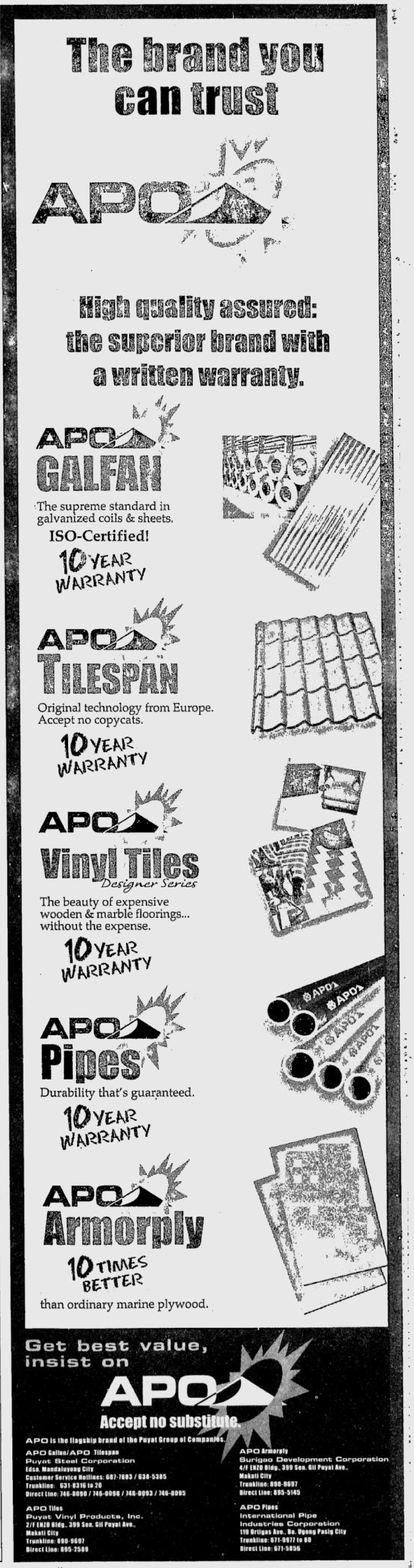

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BUSINESS

Tariff body rejects pleas for cement import quota

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE TARIFF Commission has ruled against the imposition of definitive general safeguard measures against cement imports as it rebuffed the Department of Trade and Industry's findings that imported cement was hurting the local industry.

The Tariff Commission refused to curtail cement imports saying they protect consumers by providing "competitive discipline" to "possible abuse of market" by the Big Three cement firms (Cemex, Holderbank and Blue Circle-LaFarge), which control 89 percent of domestic production.

But Trade and Industry Secretary Manuel A. Roxas II, who backed the Philippine Cement Manufacturers Corp.'s petition to block cement imports, was non-committal on whether he would heed the Tariff Commission's recommendation to lift within 15 days and refund the P20.60 provisional duty on every 40-kilogram bags of cement which the government has been collecting on all imports since November last year.

The provisional duty is good for only 200 days or until the Tariff Commission has decided on Philcemcor's petition for a 50 percent duty and quota on cement imports.

Roxas said he would review the positions of both the Tariff Commission and the DTI and that his next move would be for the national interest. Based on its review last year, Roxas said there was a just cause in Philcemcor's petition for safeguard measures because of the sharp rise in imports, shrinking market share of local brands, drastic slowdown in production and the rising number of job cuts in the industry.

But the Tariff Commission said that while there might have been a decline in production and total sales of cement from 1996 to September 2001 last year, this was not sharp or significant enough relative to prior years to constitute serious impairment in the production and sales in the country.

The Tariff Commission pointed out that the operating profits of Philcemcor members surged by 176 percent to P1.987 billion in 2000; losses were cut to a third (from P7.71 billion to P2.15 billion); and labor productivity improved.

The Tariff Commission said that cement companies that did not join Philcemcor's petition (such as Northern Cement Corp., Grand Cement Manufacturing Corp. and Titan Cement Manufacturing Corp.) posted a 32-percent increase in sales to P3.38 billion in 2000.

PSE non-broker directors may resign

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE EIGHT non-broker directors of the 15-member Philippine Stock Exchange board are considering resigning at the height of the squabble among stock brokers arising from the election of Vivian Yuchengco as chair of the exchange.

In a letter sent yesterday to the five directors led by Yuchengco rival Robert Coyiuto who were protesting Yuchengco's election, the non-brokers said: "We have seriously read and discussed the letters of 11 March 2002 and our reading of it is that you are suggesting that we resign."

"We are taking your sentiments under serious consideration," said the group in the letter, a copy of which was obtained by INQUIRER.

The letter was signed by all the eight non-broker directors who were adopted by both Yuchengco and Coyiuto camps as common candidates: PSE president Ernest Leung; economist Cayetano Paderanga; constitutionalist Joaquin Bernas; ABS-CBN chair Eugenio Lopez III; former Meralco president Mario Camacho; former Philippine National Bank president Peter Favila; former Petron Corp. chair Monico Jacob; and former Customs Commissioner Tomas Apacible.

Six of these private-sector representatives, through a secret balloting, voted for Yuchengco as PSE chair during the first meeting of the newly elected PSE board two Saturdays ago.

Five PSE directors—Coyiuto, Eddie Gobing, Federico Lim, Harry Liu and Edwin Luy—wrote to the non-broker directors last week asking them to reconsider their decision to elect Yuchengco.

The group said they had expected the non-brokers, since they were adopted as common nominees, to have abstained from the voting for the new PSE chair to preserve their independence. As the non-brokers were not subjected to free balloting as the broker representatives were, they said the non-brokers should have respected the mandate given to Coyiuto's group.

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LIFESTYLE

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

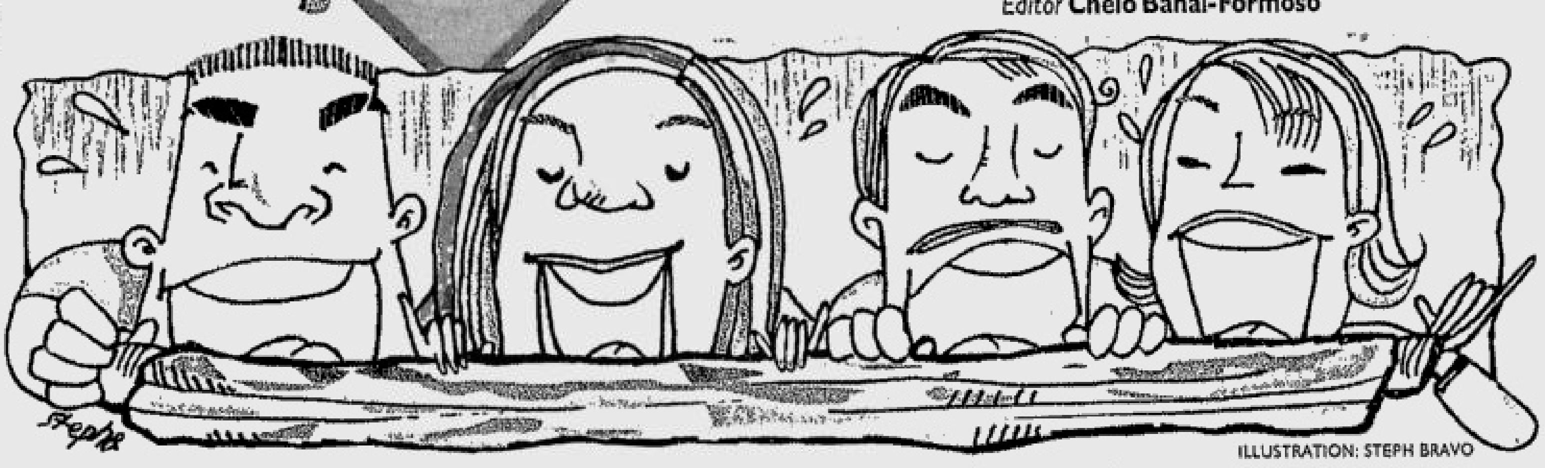


ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

How to have your baby back ribs and eat them, too

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Aboitiz Juan

THERE we were—six people from the fitness industry—sitting in a Phoenix, Arizona restaurant having "baby back pork ribs" for dinner. Mind you, no one was sharing his dinner or having a half slab. Every single one of us ordered a full slab of mouthwatering, finger-licking ribs. What gives? Aren't people who advocate fitness and making a career out of it supposed to avoid such unhealthy food like the plague? Are we being hypocrites—preaching one thing and practicing another?

I agree it must have been an irony, and we joked around that if anyone from our respective countries had taken our picture, they could easily have blackmailed us. After all, there were fitness professionals, fitness equipment distributors and the president of one of the world's largest associations for fitness professionals in our group.

But let me assure you we did nothing wrong. We did not behave like two-faced fitness charlatans. It was just an example of how something like baby back ribs can fit into a healthy diet as long as it is done only once in a while. Now, "once in a while" is a relative term, and if you define it as three times a week, you are fooling no one but yourself. But if your definition is more like once a month, then you are on the right track.

Eating food like that on a regular basis is a ticket to blimpdom and heart disease. But if you only eat it occasionally, you can enjoy unhealthy but yummy food without the guilt and without damage to your waistline or your health. After all, food is one of the great pleasures in life. Nature made it that way so we wouldn't starve to death due to lack of interest in eating. That's why sleep and sex are pleasurable—to make sure we get enough rest and to make sure the human race continues. However, too much of anything is not good for you. So balance and moderation are key principles in maintaining your weight and health.

80-20 eating rule

Despite having weight problems in my teens and inheriting "chunky" genes, I have been able to maintain my weight for 20-plus years without having to resort to diet pills, strenuous diets, skipping meals or other extreme forms of weight control. I believe it is because I exercise regularly and I practice the 80-20 eating rule. I eat for health 80 percent of the time and for taste 20 percent of the time.

Eating healthy for me means a diet of fruits and vegetables, whole-grain sources of starchy carbohydrates (examples are brown rice and whole wheat bread), legumes (*monggo* or red/white beans) and low-fat sources of animal protein and dairy products.

Eating for taste can mean anything from Oreo cookies to tiramisu to crispy *pata*. Chocolates, Pancake House pancakes (the best in the world!), Max's fried chicken, pork barbecue and *chicharon* also make well-spaced appearances in the 20-percent part of my diet. However, much as I love these kinds of food, there is no way they can be my constant companions without affecting my weight and my health.

It's important to me that I have the freedom to eat these types of food because I used to have the all-or-nothing attitude. I was either on a diet (by this I mean a weight-loss diet) or I wasn't. I was either "good" or "bad." When I was on a diet, I would meticulously count calories, carbohydrates, fat or whatever was the reigning diet demon, skip meals and eat miniscule portions. Then, when I had had enough of diet hell, I would binge and have all-out pig-outs for days.

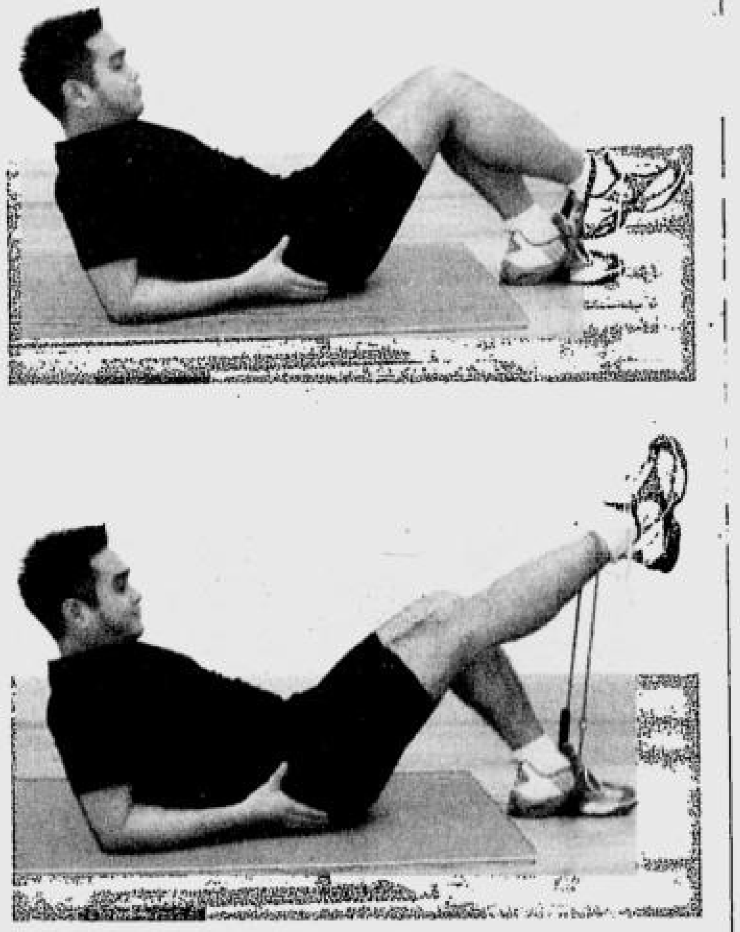
Deprivation is no-no

Ultimately, this kind of behavior led to bulimia, a binge-and-purge (translation: vomiting) eating disorder.

I don't know about you, but I don't take very well to deprivation. The more forbidden something is on a diet, the more I end up wanting it. And will power? Forget it; I don't have much of it. It took me a couple of years to figure out that dieting was totally counterproductive for me. It was actually making me fatter because I would gain everything back, and more, when I would binge. It was only when I learned to make friends with food and live within the boundaries of balance, mod-

HOW/ p.C3

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK



Leaning back knee extension

TONES and strengthens the front of the thighs (quadriceps).

Equipment:

If you are just starting this exercise, you don't need accessories of any kind. The weight of your leg is enough resistance. As you get stronger, you can use a long, thick rubber band (the kind kids use for slingshots), which is more challenging, or you can use ankle weights of 1-5 pounds on each leg.

Exercise technique:

1. Lie back on the floor, supporting upper body on forearms, knees bent with feet flat on floor. If you are using a rubber band, put one end around the bottom of one foot and the ankle of the other.
2. Lift the leg with the rubber band around the ankle toward the chest until the knee is over the hip. Keep the foot flexed.
3. Hold position and straighten the leg.
4. Bend the knee and bring the leg back to the chest. Repeat.

Performance tips:

1. Straighten the leg by squeezing the muscles in front of the thighs.
2. Straighten the knee with a slow and controlled movement. Avoid jerking and locking the knee.
3. Keep chest open throughout the exercise. Avoid slumping the shoulders down.

Repetitions:

Fifteen repetitions per leg make one set. Do 1 or 2 more sets.

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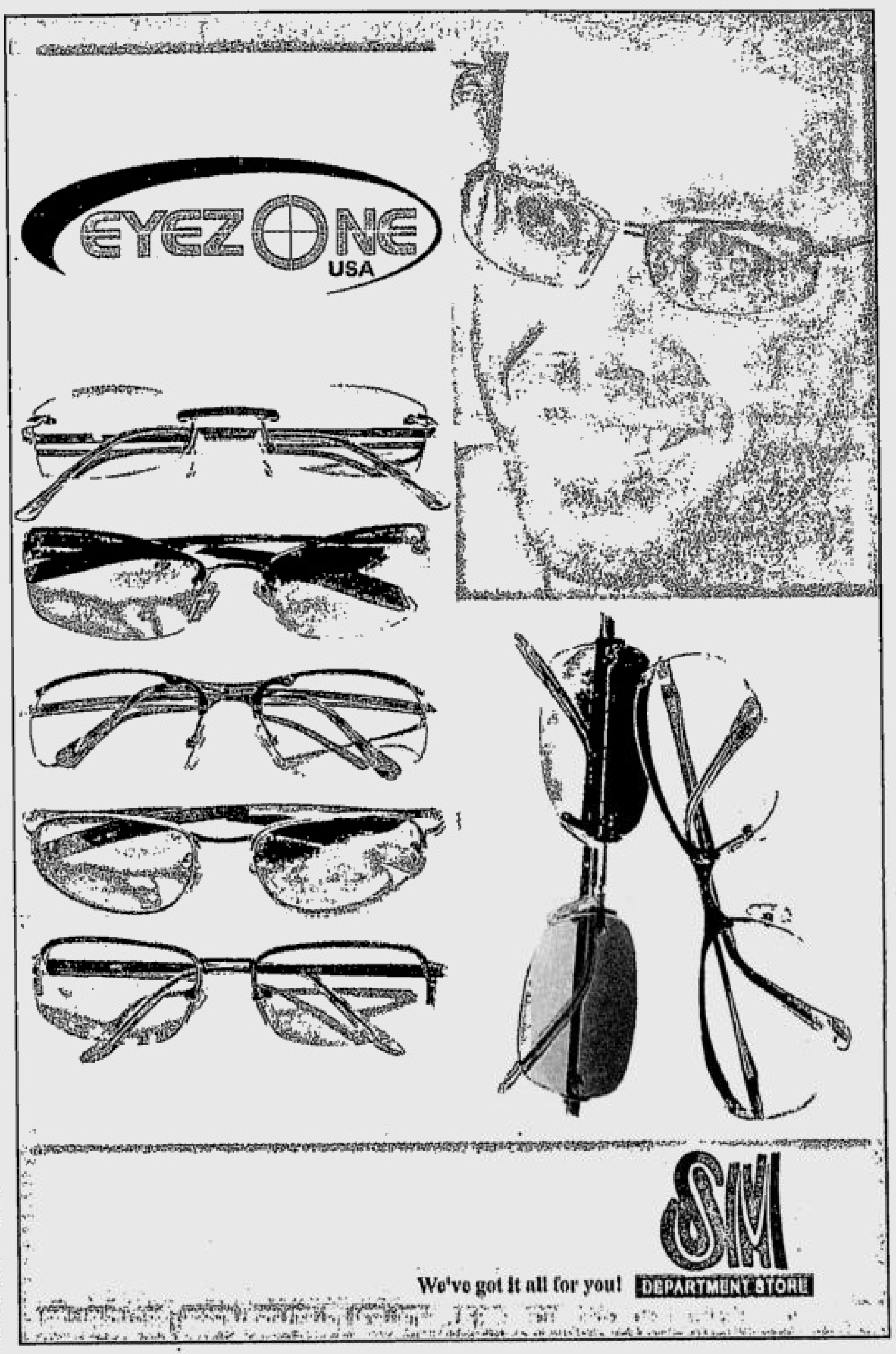

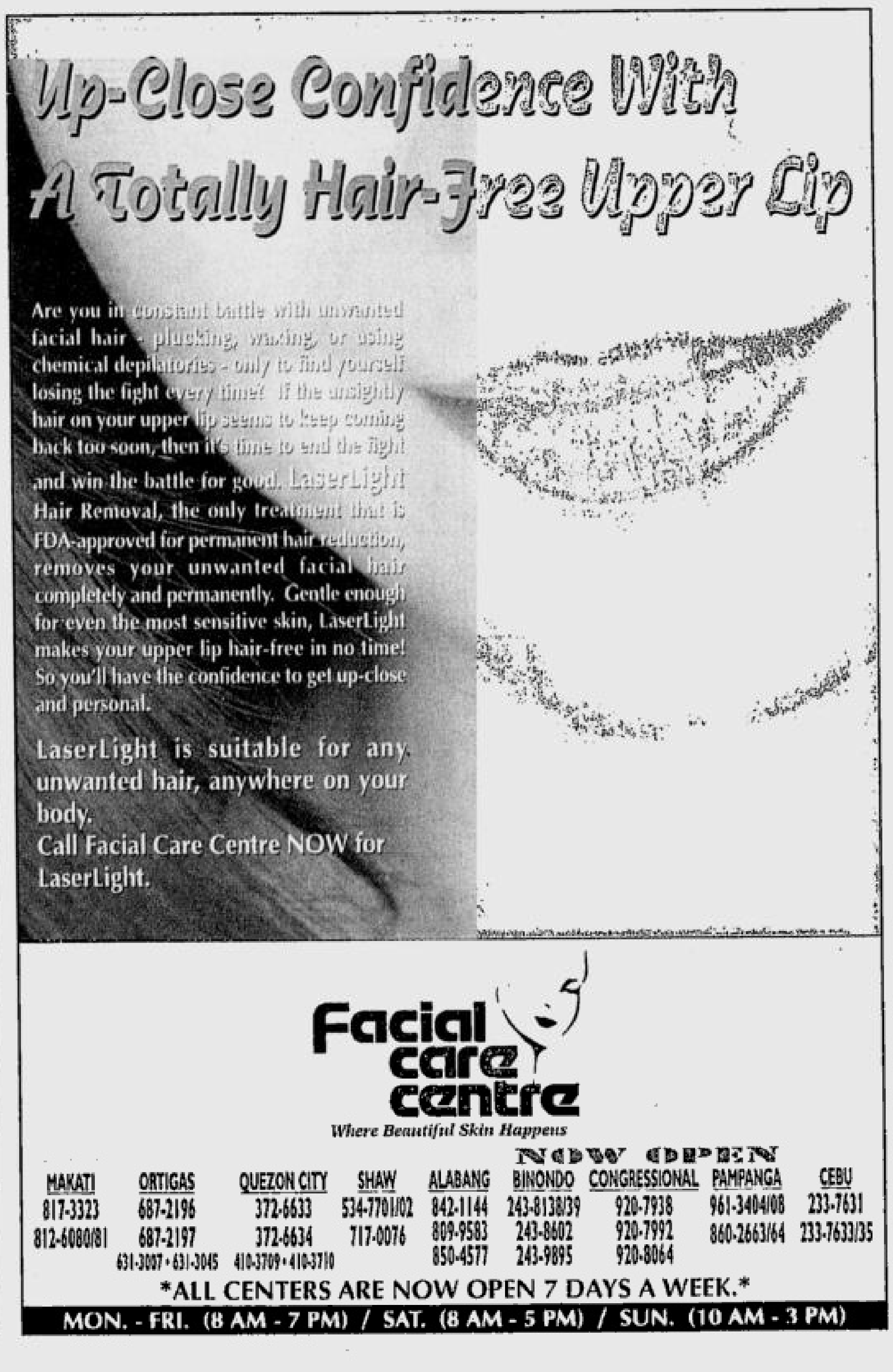

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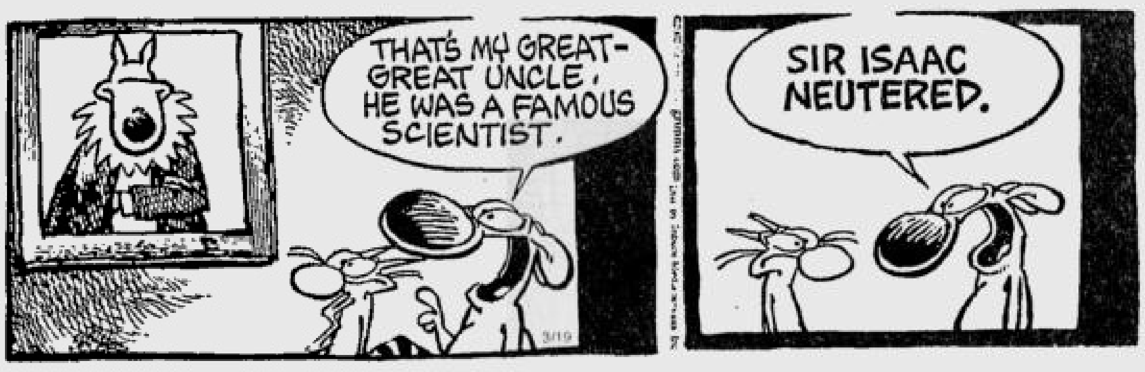
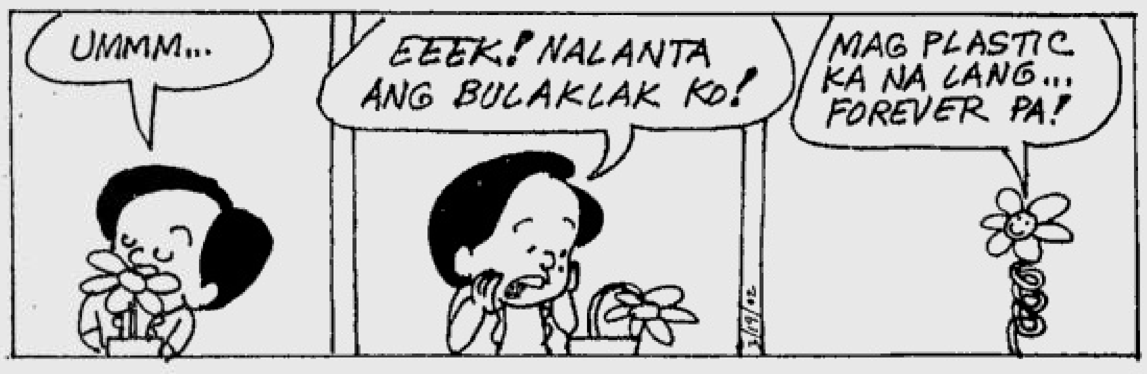
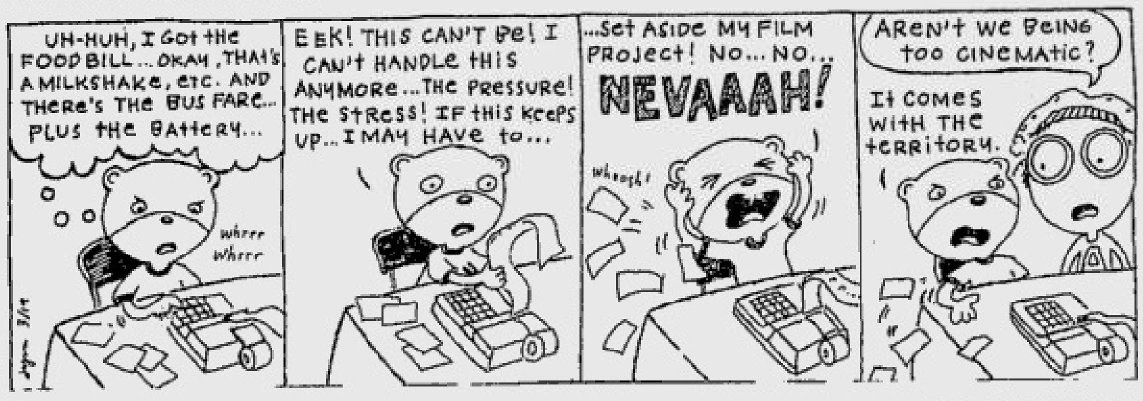

THAT'S MY GREAT-GREAT UNCLE. HE WAS A FAMOUS SCIENTIST.
SIR ISAAC NEUTERED.
3/19

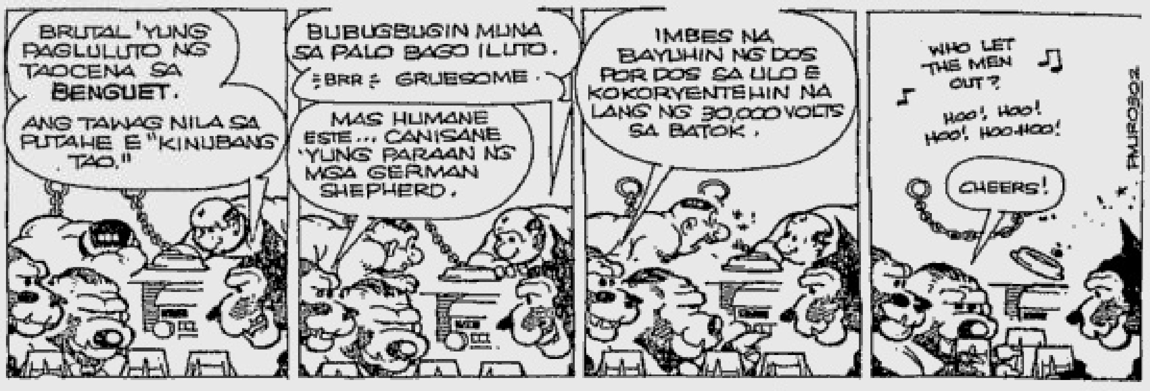
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


UMMM...
EEEK! NALANTA ANG BULAKLAK KO!
MAG PLASTIC KA NA LANG... FOREVER PA!

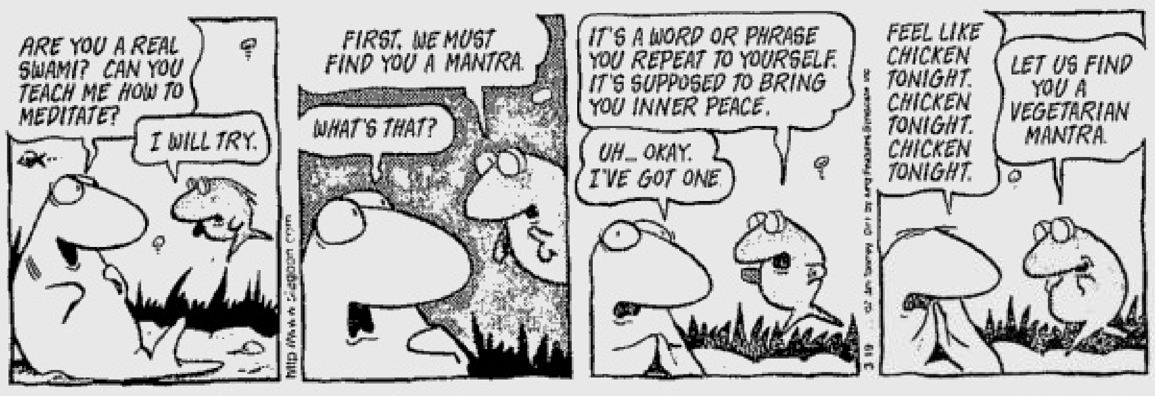
ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO


UH-HUH, I GOT THE FOOD BILL... OKAY, THAT'S A MILKSHAKE, ETC. AND THERE'S THE BUS FARE... PLUS THE BATTERY...
Whrrr Whrrr
EEK! THIS CAN'T BE! I CAN'T HANDLE THIS ANYMORE... THE PRESSURE! THE STRESS! IF THIS KEEPS UP... I MAY HAVE TO...
...SET ASIDE MY FILM PROJECT! NO... NO... NEVAAAH!
Whoosh!
AREN'T WE BEING TOO CINEMATIC?
IT COMES WITH THE TERRITORY.

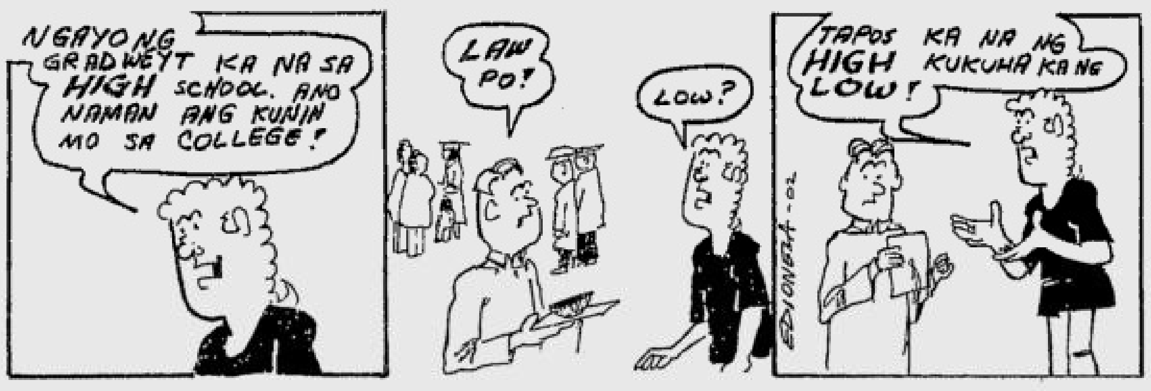
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


BRUTAL 'YUNG PAGLULUTO NG TAOCENA SA BENGUET.
ANG TAWAG NILA SA PUTAHE E "KINUBANG TAO."
BUBUGBUGIN MUNA SA PALO BAGO ILUTO.
BRR GRUESOME
MAS HUMANE ESTE... CANISANE 'YUNG PARAAN NG MGA GERMAN SHEPHERD.
IMBES NA BAYUHIN NG DOS POR DOS SA ULO E KOKORYENTEHIN NA LANG NG 30,000 VOLTS SA BATOK.
WHO LET THE MEN OUT?
HOO! HOO! HOO! HOO-HOO!
CHEERS!
PMJR0302

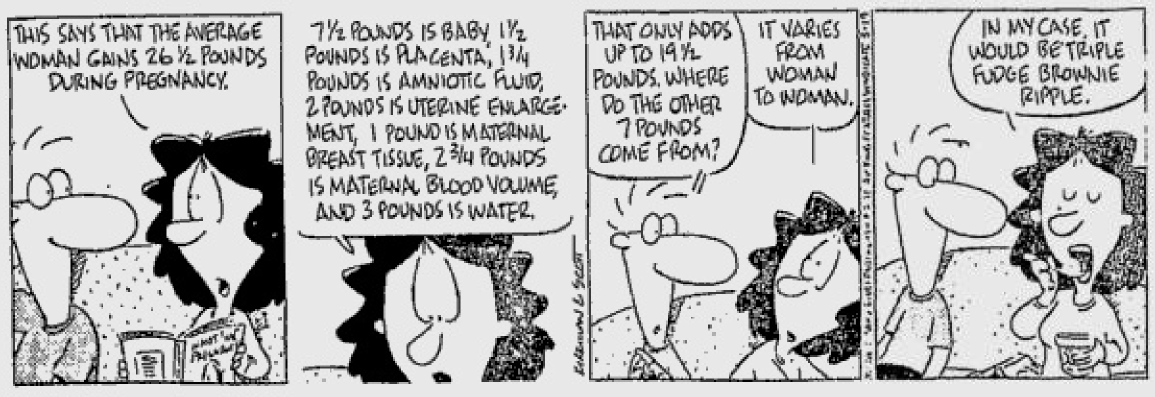
SHERMAN'S LAGOON BY JIM TOOMEY


ARE YOU A REAL SWAMI? CAN YOU TEACH ME HOW TO MEDITATE?
I WILL TRY.
FIRST, WE MUST FIND YOU A MANTRA.
WHAT'S THAT?
IT'S A WORD OR PHRASE YOU REPEAT TO YOURSELF. IT'S SUPPOSED TO BRING YOU INNER PEACE.
UH... OKAY. I'VE GOT ONE.
FEEL LIKE CHICKEN TONIGHT. CHICKEN TONIGHT. CHICKEN TONIGHT.
LET US FIND YOU A VEGETARIAN MANTRA.

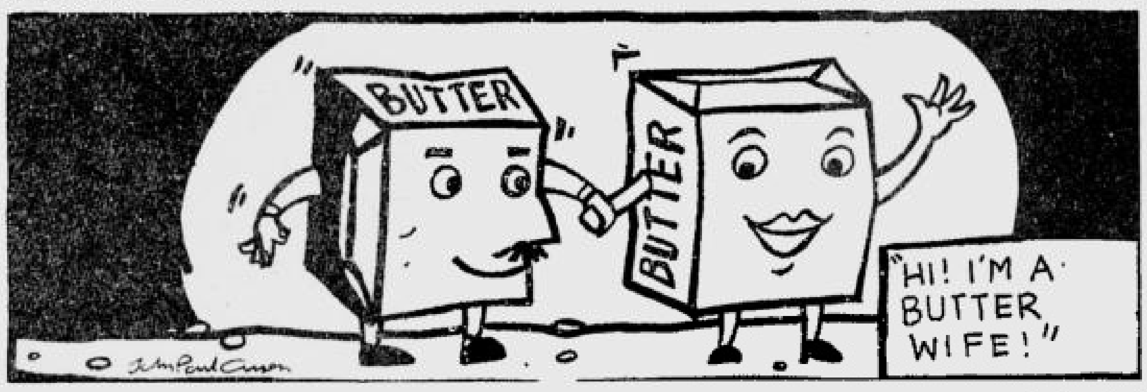
SIMO BY EDGAR DIONELA


NGAYONG GRADWEYT KA NA SA HIGH SCHOOL. ANO NAMAN ANG KUNIN MO SA COLLEGE!
LAW PO!
LOW?
TAPOS KA NA NG HIGH KUKUHA KA NG LOW!
EDIONELA-02

BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


THIS SAYS THAT THE AVERAGE WOMAN GAINS 26½ POUNDS DURING PREGNANCY.
7½ POUNDS IS BABY, 1½ POUNDS IS PLACENTA, 1¾ POUNDS IS AMNIOTIC FLUID, 2 POUNDS IS UTERINE ENLARGEMENT, 1 POUND IS MATERNAL BREAST TISSUE, 2¾ POUNDS IS MATERNAL BLOOD VOLUME, AND 3 POUNDS IS WATER.
THAT ONLY ADDS UP TO 19½ POUNDS. WHERE DO THE OTHER 7 POUNDS COME FROM?
IT VARIES FROM WOMAN TO WOMAN.
IN MY CASE, IT WOULD BE TRIPLE FUDGE BROWNIE RIPPLE.

GARAPATA BLOOD BY JOHN PAUL CUISON


BUTTER
BUTTER
"HI! I'M A BUTTER WIFE!"

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Bruce Willis, Glenn Close, Ursula Andress, Phyllis Newman

Happy Birthday: All you have to do is make a few changes this year,and everything else will fall into place. Take the initiative and make your dreams come true instead of just hoping that they will all by themselves. The time to take responsibility for yourself and your future is now. Your numbers are 2, 8, 14, 26, 31, 45

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Your ability to make extra money will help you pay those unpaid bills that have been hanging over your head.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Don't react too quickly to what others have to say. You will be overly sensitive and this could cause you to take things said the wrong way. Listen, observe and stay calm.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): You will be bound and determined to complete whatever you start today. You will have many opportunities available to you profits can be made.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Do not volunteer your services today. Too many other important issues will arise that you have to deal with. Focus on your home and making the necessary alterations.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Don't trust those you work with today. You may find yourself in an awkward position if a colleague asks you to cover for him or her.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You will be enthusiastic and inspirational today, sparking interest in anyone you talk to. Your confidence level should be up and your ability to present your ideas with gusto will help you move in a positive direction.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): You have everything going for you so don't get dragged into joint ventures with someone who needs you more than you need him or her. Focus on yourself, your direction and your goals.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Emotional issues will be difficult to handle today. Keep a cool head and let others do the talking for now. You will have a much better assessment of the situation if you listen and observe.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Your ability to get things done will put you in a good position at work. If you aren't employed you should be able to find employment or accomplish a lot doing the chores that you have to complete today.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): If you aren't happy with the way you look or your current style today is the time to make a change. You will have some great ideas that won't be that expensive.

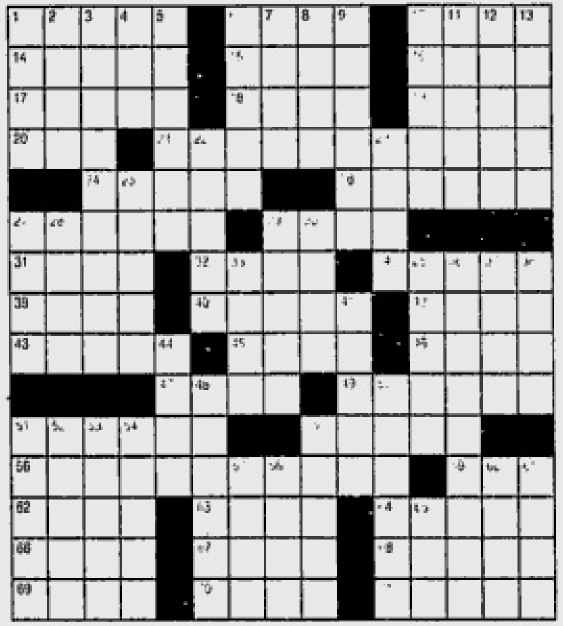
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): This may not be the best day to get along with family members but if you make plans for everyone to get involved in a joint effort, things will run relatively smoothly. Much can be accomplished if you are well-organized.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): You'll be in the mood to get together with good friends or relatives. This is a good day to let others know how you feel and what your intentions are.

Birthday Baby: You will tend to stick to conventional beliefs and attitudes and will be dedicated to any group or organization you join. Your interest in philosophy and in education will lead you to distant lands.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Norma Steinberg
San Francisco, CA

3/19/02

ACROSS
1 Sticks it out
6 __ the tentmaker
10 Q-tip
14 Contribution
15 Call on the links
16 Romanian round dance
17 Enact
18 Stumble
19 Famous cookie maker
20 Atmosphere
21 Still in a movie
24 Impish
26 Sports venues
27 Sell direct
29 Distribute
31 Touched down
32 Throw out, as light
34 Puccini opera
39 Bog down
40 Prepared to take notice?
42 Subway station
43 Jury makeup
45 "Star Wars" princess
46 Fiddler in the sand
47 Lubricates
49 Characteristics
51 Spiral-shell mollusk
55 Bare
56 Ice cream and fruit treat
59 Significant period
62 Mid-month
63 Reprobate
64 Scout group
66 Rents
67 Compulsion
68 Former nit
69 Overdo TLC
70 Trial by fire
71 "__ Laughing"

DOWN
1 Writer Alther
2 Against
3 Belly ring?
4 Harbor craft
5 Graf of tennis
6 Regularly
7 Extra
8 Neighbor of N.Mex.
9 Do over again
10 Portion
11 "Scent of a __"
12 Scent
13 Military installations
22 Stirs to anger
23 Guitar increment
25 Subsequent
27 Cloverleaf part
28 Nobel Prize winner Wiesel
29 Minute arachnids
30 Ornamental case
33 Downtown's replacement
35 De la Hoya of boxing
36 Go down swinging
37 Surface layer
38 Police broadcast alerts: abbr.
41 Singer Page
44 Any day now
48 Doing the same old same old
50 Noisemaker
51 Ford revival, briefly
52 Communication device
53 Clumsy
54 French cup
55 Fall as ice
57 Irritated
58 Snub-nosed dogs
60 Got up
61 Simon Says player
65 Actor Eli

Monday's Puzzle Solved

P	R	E	S	S	■	S	L	A	B	■	P	R	A	T
R	E	A	C	T	■	N	O	L	O	■	A	I	R	E
O	N	R	O	U	T	E	S	I	X	T	Y	S	I	X
W	E	L	T	■	E	A	T	■	L	O	O	K	A	T
■	■	■	T	O	C	K	■	D	U	E	L	■	■	■
O	A	F	I	S	H	■	M	O	N	■	A	L	O	T
O	M	A	S	A	■	R	A	N	C	H	■	A	B	E
H	I	G	H	W	A	Y	T	O	H	E	A	V	E	N
E	N	E	■	A	L	D	E	R	■	A	L	I	S	T
D	O	N	T	■	L	E	S	■	P	L	A	N	E	S
■	■	■	E	M	I	R	■	B	A	S	S	■	■	■
A	T	T	A	I	N	■	S	O	N	■	K	O	L	A
T	H	E	R	O	A	D	N	O	T	T	A	K	E	N
M	E	R	E	■	L	O	A	N	■	E	N	L	A	I
S	E	N	D	■	L	A	G	S	■	T	S	A	R	S

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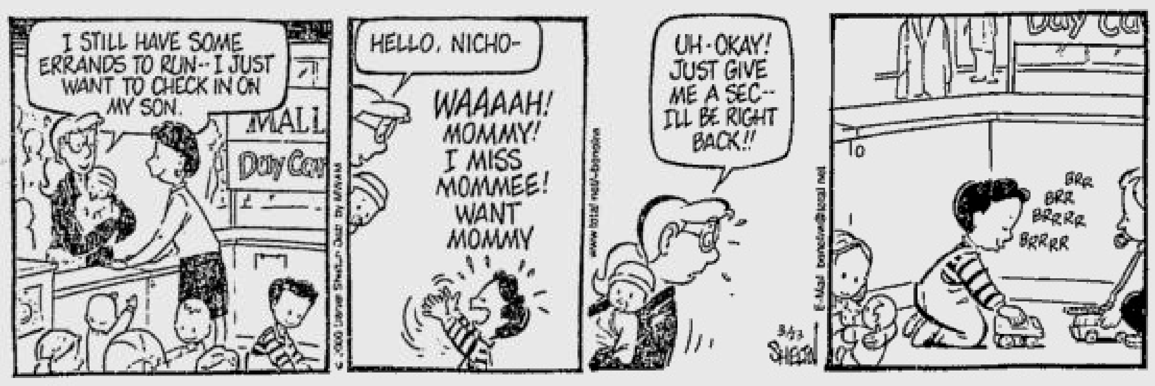
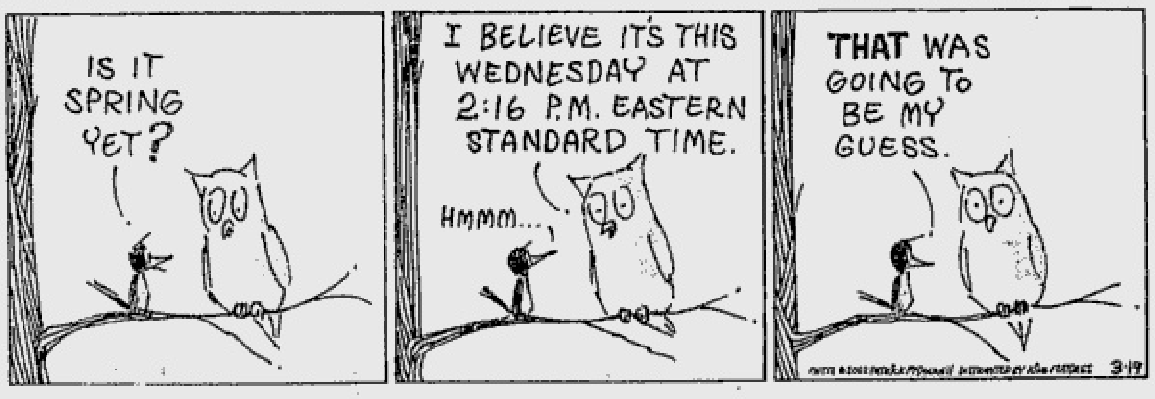
3/18/02

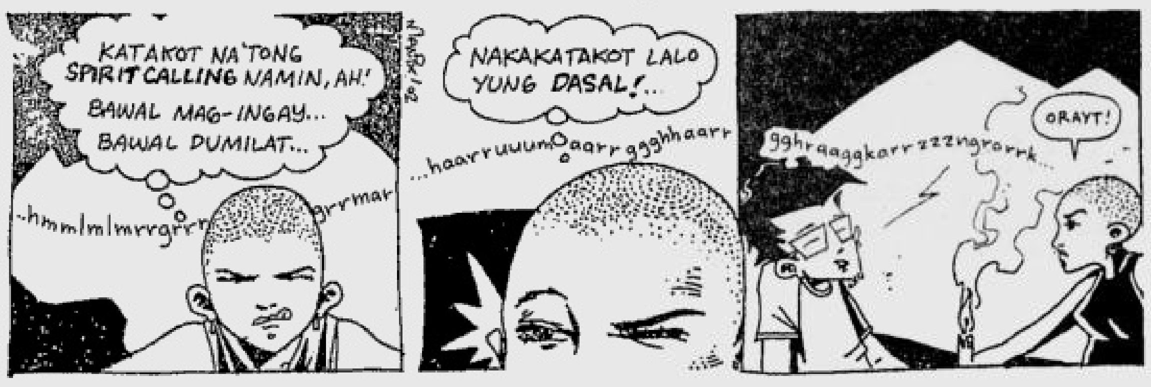
BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


I STILL HAVE SOME ERRANDS TO RUN-- I JUST WANT TO CHECK IN ON MY SON.
MALL
Day Care
HELLO, NICHO-
WAAAAH! MOMMY! I MISS MOMMEE! WANT MOMMY
UH-OKAY! JUST GIVE ME A SEC-- I'LL BE RIGHT BACK!!
BRR BRR BRRRR BRRRR

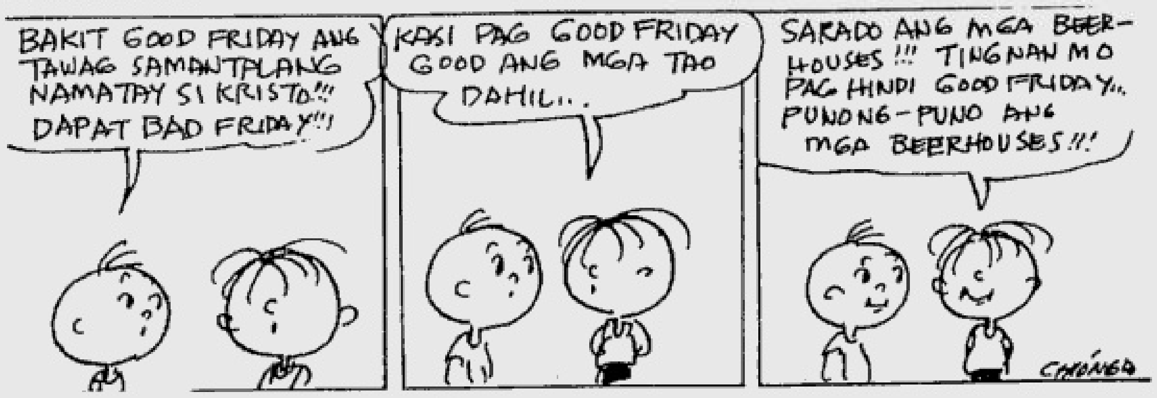
MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL


IS IT SPRING YET?
I BELIEVE IT'S THIS WEDNESDAY AT 2:16 P.M. EASTERN STANDARD TIME.
HMMM...
THAT WAS GOING TO BE MY GUESS.
3-19

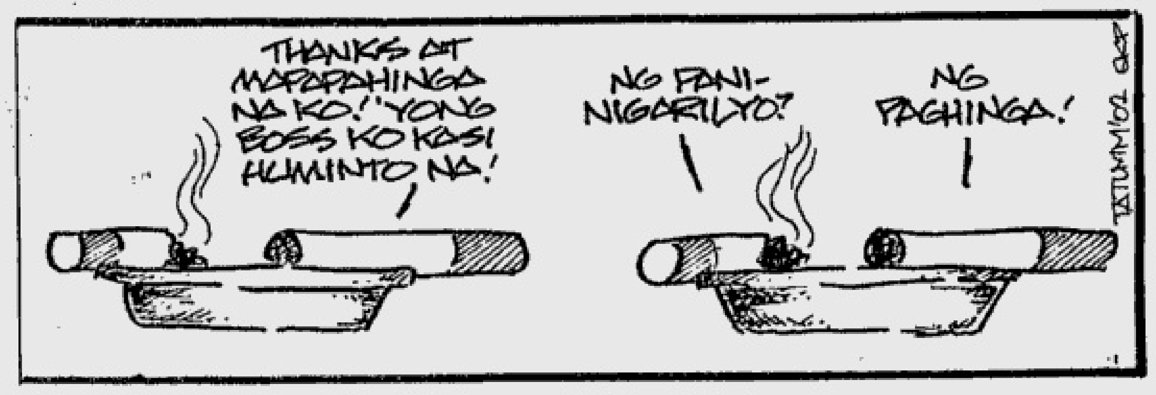
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


KATAKOT NA'TONG SPIRIT CALLING NAMIN, AH! BAWAL MAG-INGAY... BAWAL DUMILAT...
..hmmlmlmrrgrrrgrrmar
NAKAKATAKOT LALO YUNG DASAL!...
...haarruuunOaarrggghhaarr
gghraaggkarrzzzngrorrk...
ORAYT!

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


BAKIT GOOD FRIDAY ANG TAWAG SAMANTALANG NAMATAY SI KRISTO!!! DAPAT BAD FRIDAY!!!
KASI PAG GOOD FRIDAY GOOD ANG MGA TAO DAHIL...
SARADO ANG MGA BEERHOUSES!!! TINGNAN MO PAG HINDI GOOD FRIDAY.. PUNONG-PUNO ANG MGA BEERHOUSES!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


THANKS AT MAPAPAHINGA NA KO! 'YONG BOSS KO KASI HUMINTO NA!
NG PANINIGARILYO?
NG PAGHINGA!
TATUM'02

The spiritual doom of Mt. Banahaw

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco

"A TRIP to mystic Mt. Banahaw is no longer free," according to a news item in the March 7 issue of the INQUIRER.

A municipal ordinance now requires all visitors to Mt. Banahaw, which is a national park, to pay P5 as conservation fee, P20 as camping fee, P50-P100 as campsite fee (for three days and two nights' stay) and an optional fee of P50 as certificate of conquest, says the news.

During the last decade, Mt. Banahaw, which is considered the most important natural spiritual center of the Philippines, has been changing very much, not only physically, but more importantly, spiritually. The latest development that could spell its spiritual doom is the introduction of electricity several years ago. Electrification has accelerated the commercialization of the holy place.

But this was not unanticipated. Mediums and mystics of the mountain have long ago predicted that "When the noise of the city comes to Mt. Banahaw, it will be the beginning of the end of the mountain." Where we heard only the chirping of birds and crickets before, one now hears loud western music and soap opera on radio in the mountain. Where once we used to walk quietly to the sacred sites, we now hear the noise of buses, jeepneys and SUVs along the way.

This Lenten season, we can expect the yearly rape of Mt. Banahaw to take place once more. But with this fee requirement, fewer people may trek up there, which is good for the mountain. There was a time in the 1990s when about half a million pilgrims and curiosity seekers trooped to the mystic mountains, leaving tons upon tons of litter and human waste behind.

I used to visit Mt. Banahaw every weekend in the '80s and even brought quite a number of foreigners there. Now no more. The energy of the mountain has definitely changed. And the spirits guarding the sacred places are mostly gone. I understand there are still highly charged caves and *puestos* there, but one has to be extra sensitive to feel them.

I have been told that the spirits of the mountain are saddened by the desecration and commercialization of the holy mountain. Most of the people who now visit Mt. Banahaw are mountain climbers and plain curious people, and no longer those seeking spiritual solace and enlightenment, unlike in the olden days.

Onslaught of commercialization

To be sure, there are very courageous and far-sighted individuals in Mt. Banahaw who are heroically trying to save the mystic mountain from becoming just one more tourist spot in the country. But their great efforts pale in comparison to the relentless onslaughts of modernization and commercialization of the place.

The prophets and mystics of this sacred place are again being proven right.

The spirits revealed to me during one of my trance channelings some years ago that they would transfer the sacred places elsewhere.

I believe I have found one of such sacred places in a privately owned mysterious mountain in Lucban, Quezon. This 23-hectare virgin land is owned by a businessman-cum-mystic from Pateros, Rizal. It has a brook where some spirits appear and a powerfully charged boulder inhabited by out-of-this-world spirits. Many UFOs are also seen in the place, mostly during the evening. The place is conducive to meditation and communing with Mother Nature. The owner, Artemio Cataquiz, has built a rest house, a large social and meditation tower in the area. Nobody can go there without permission or invitation and even when he opens it to the public, it will be under controlled conditions in order to preserve the purity and sanctity of the place.

"I will not allow what has happened to Mt. Banahaw to happen to my place," declared Cataquiz.

Let's hope so.

Write to 308 Prince Plaza I, 106 Legaspi St., Greenbelt, Makati City or e-mail jlicauco@geocities.com. Visit http://jlicauco.tripod.com. Listen to my dzMM radio program every Sunday, 6-8 p.m.

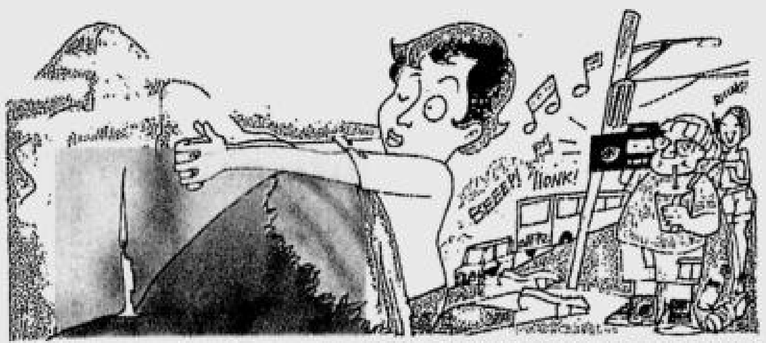


ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Take Charge Doc!

Nicky S. Montoya, M.D.

Looking to learn more about your benefits under your MEDICard coverage? Do you want to be clear on the procedures, which allow you to avail of MEDICard's services? Get your information straight from MEDICard's Medical Director, DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA every Tuesday.

FAQs (frequently asked questions)

Is rehabilitation treatment such as physical, occupational or speech therapy included in the HMO program?

Rehabilitation treatments specific to physical, occupational and speech therapy, on an outpatient basis is not part of the standard HMO program. During approved hospital confinements however, if such is prescribed, it is covered. For big group and corporate clients. outpatient rehabilitation services may be included into their healthcare program but is subject to negotiated limits.

Meet your MEDICard Team

If you have been to MEDICard's Satellite Clinic at Medical City General Hospital, you may already have met or at least seen **Dr. Raymund Joaquin F. Erese**. Dr. Erese specializes in General Surgery and has been in the practice of his profession for more than 7 years now. Doc Raymund is a Medicine graduate and earned his residency training for his specialization from UERM-MMC. Known to most as Doctor "E", he has been addressing MEDICard members' medical needs for over 3 years now. Currently, Doc Raymund is engaged with his Masters Degree in Public Health, with special interest in Health Research at the University of the Philippines, Manila. Visit him for your consultations at MEDICard's MCGH Satellite Clinic, every Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 2 to 5 in the afternoon.

After earning her degree in Medicine from St. Louis University in Baguio City, **Dr. Maribel Dinge-Asuncion** chose to specialize in Obstetrics and Gynecology. After only two years of clinical practice in her chosen specialization, she again pursued further training and subspecialized in Ultrasonography. Doc Maribel is married to businessman, Jessie Asuncion with whom she has a daughter, Jessica. She is a loving and caring wife and mother and spends most of her time with her family. She now holds clinic at room 114 of the Perpetual Help Medical Center in Biñan, Laguna from Mondays to Saturdays, except on Wednesdays, from 1 to 5 PM.

With the goal of meeting the demands of our increasing number of members, effective last March 08, MEDICard installed its newly upgraded telephone system and NEW TRUNK LINE NUMBER:

840-2020

We encourage all MEDICard members to voice out their concerns and issues at hand. BE HEARD AND BE READ. You can write DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA at 9/F Sagittarius Bldg. H.V. De la Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City or e-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com. For feedback on availment of our services, e-mail us at feedback@medicardphils.com.

For inquiries on individual or family membership, dial 840 -2020 local 2017 and look for Ms. Joy Mendiola. For group or corporate membership, dial local 2049 and look for a membership consultant.

TEXT MEDICard for your queries: 0917-7518365 (Globe) or 0919-2476240 (Smart). Please don't forget to include your complete name and landline number where MEDICard could reach you. Log on to www.medicardphils.com

MEDICard is the first and only HMO in the Philippines and the whole Asian region to be ISO 9002 certified.

ISO 9002
UKAS

How to have your baby back ribs . . .

From page C1

eration and compromise that I was finally set free.

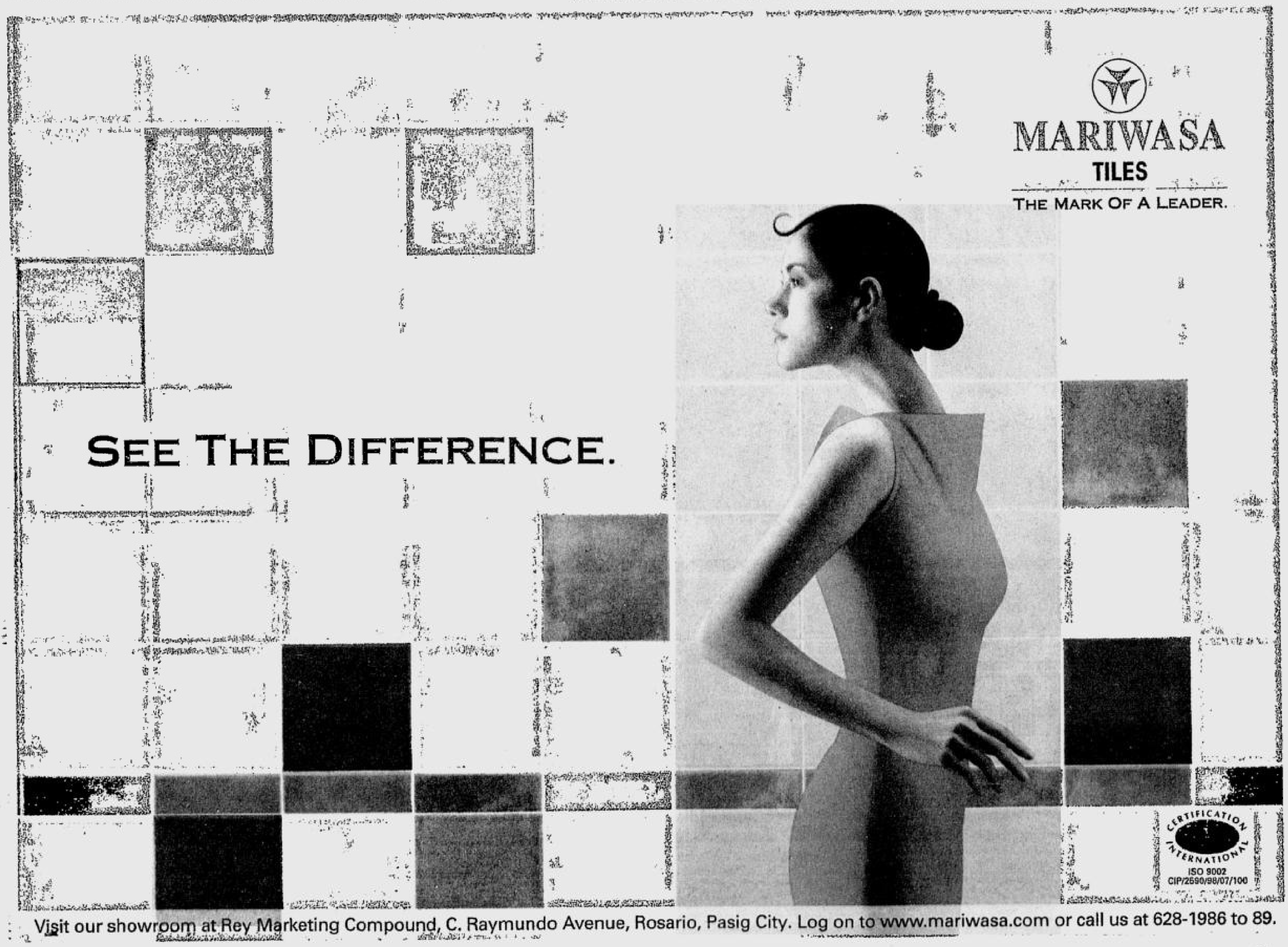
Here are other methods I use to control my weight and still enjoy my food. Some of them might work for you.

- Minimize the damage. That night, I didn't eat any of the appetizers, bread rolls or side dishes (baked potato full of sour cream). I stuck to the main event. Why add insult to injury?
- Watch out for liquid calories. When I know I am going to eat a high-calorie treat, I order only water. No need to up the calorie tab by an extra 100-200 calories by ordering juices or iced teas.
- Eat slowly. This allows me to savor every bite, enjoy all the nuances of the food's flavor and satisfy my brain's appetite center. Some people chew their food 20-30 times. I find that a bit much but, hey, if it works for you, go for it.
- "I will live to eat this another day." There is no need to make a pig of yourself as if you will never eat a Decadent Chocolate Cake again in your life.

* * *

The Association of Fitness Professionals of the Phils. (AFPP) will hold its Provincial Fit Tours in the following areas: Baguio, March 22-24 (Call Susan Sanidad at [074] 444-9798 or e-mail isanidad@bgo.csi.com.ph); Cebu, April 12-14 (Veronica Enriquez at [032] 234-1643 or e-mail fitadcbu@mozcom.com); Cagayan de Oro, April 19-21 (contact person to be announced later). The tour includes a two-day Basic Instructor Course and a one-day Fitness Workshop.

For inquiries or past articles and exercises, visit http://www.tinajuanfitness.com



Visit our showroom at Rey Marketing Compound, C. Raymundo Avenue, Rosario, Pasig City. Log on to www.mariwasa.com or call us at 628-1986 to 89.

Salt bath can cleanse one's aura

INSIDE OUT

Cory Quirino

FOR SOME magical reason, ancient cultures like India have given salt such high regard. Salt has the power to absorb negative energy. And once mixed with a medium like water, the chemistry transforms the union into an absorbent sponge.

Thought as energy

It is believed that thoughts have energy; in fact, thought is energy. And once our mind transmits it to the universe, it creates ripples in the ocean of life. And so the challenge is, just how positive are you? And how much negative energy do we store within us? How heavy is the weight we carry?

Negative energy has the power to attract illness, thus the need to cleanse our auras—the magnetic field of energy that radiates from our bodies. It is said that before illness manifests in the body, it is reflected in one's aura. Of course, only a sensitive person like a healer can see or sense this.

But we don't have to be psychics to feel our own "heaviness." We are all gifted with a sensitivity to the stirrings of our own hearts. Thus, if a medical doctor advises us all to "listen to our bodies," why not listen to our souls, too? Maybe it's time for some cleansing.

Healer or patient

Do you know that there is such a thing as cleansing one's aura or what they call the bioplasmic body? Pranic healers can do this within minutes. And the immediate effect is lightness and even relief for those who suffer from various illnesses. You may be a patient or become a healer yourself by calling The Pranic Healing Center at 635-9732 to 34.

But if you want a home remedy now, try this treatment.

Salt bath

3 c of salt (I prefer rock salt)
2 gallons of clean water

While in the shower, pour the saline solution over your entire body beginning at the top of your head.

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Visualization: Picture yourself being cleansed, your life force radiating with brightness. Smile.

Affirmation: "I am cleansed. I am shiny and new."

Silken body

While you are at it, treat your body to exfoliation. Rubbing away dry skin gives new skin cells a better chance to breathe. This will make your skin smoother and silkier after the scrub. Do not apply on broken skin or open wound. Make this a monthly bath ritual.

Body salts

1 c rock salt
3 tbsp light baby oil or corn/olive oil

Mix the ingredients and scrub your body lightly from the feet upward.

Since summer beckons us all to the sea, there's no need for a salt bath. When you immerse in the sea, remember to connect with yourself. And in a few moments of silence you can hold within, remember that you are one with the ocean, one with nature, one with life itself.

E-mail the author at lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

Most obese Filipinos seldom seek treatment, study says

A LOCAL study on the prevalence of obesity in medical practice has placed the prevalence at 21 percent. A further 25 percent were overweight. Conducted by the Philippine Association for the Study of Overweight and Obesity (PASOO), the study revealed that only 8 percent obese patients seek treatment.

Considered by the World Health Organization as an epidemic, obesity increases risk of type 2 diabetes; respiratory, heart and gall bladder diseases; hormonal abnormalities, hyperucaemia and gout; stroke, cardiovascular risk factors; osteoarthritis; certain cancers like prostate and colorectal for men, and endometrium, uterus, cervix and ovary for women.

Majority of obese patients are between 21-45 years old. Among the respondents, the concomitant diseases found were glucose and lipid abnormalities and cardiovascular disease. PASOO head Dr. Augusto Litonjua further explained that while overweight is an increased in body weight in relation to height, obesity is an increased amount of body fat or adipose tissue. The waist circumference is an accurate measure of the amount of fat inside the abdomen or visceral fat. The clinical thresholds are 102 cm in men and 88 cm in women.

Litonjua stressed the importance of weight management. "Obesity risk factors can be treated simultaneously through maintained weight loss," he said. Litonjua cited the Xenical (Orlistat) as an effective pharmacotherapeutic agent in weight loss. Xenical is a prescription drug that reduces fat absorption by about one-third regardless of the amount of fat.

Spend Smart and Save with an Equitable Card

Congratulations to the graduates of 2002! As you dance out of college and waltz into the professional world. Your first paycheck is not too far away.

But before you start spending the money you worked so hard for, here are some tips from the financial experts at the Equitable CardNetwork, the country's leading credit card provider.

The Equitable CardNetwork gives new graduates like you a host of cards to choose from—the Equitable Visa, VISA Electron, MasterCard, JCB, and American Express.

The Equitable Card espouses smart spending by sharing these valuable money saving tips:

Build A Black Hole. In a few years from now, you will be getting married, starting your own family, putting up your own business, or taking a Caribbean cruise. So you better start saving up for that by planning your expenses. From the outset, figure out how much of your salary will go to your basic necessities and how much you have to contribute to your household. Set aside a small amount for luxuries like watching a movie, or eating out on weekends. The rest should go into a 'black hole' bank account. Just like real black holes in outer space, what goes in never comes out. Be firm and don't succumb to petty temptations. When that milestone in your life comes ten years from now, you will look back with satisfaction at all those times when you refused to dip your hands into your black hole.

Invest in Quality. Quality should be your first and foremost concern in buying anything. Going for good quality appliances, for example will save you the aggravation and costs of repeated repairs. Even if the initial cash outlay may seem bigger, you are actually saving more money. The same rule applies when shopping for clothes, shoes, and other personal effects. Always keep in mind that cheap products often turn out to be disposable, requiring you to buy a replacement long before you intend to. This doesn't mean, however, that you should go only for premium brand name products. Do your homework and research about the best value-for-money bargains. In doing so, you will be able to find the best compromise—a reasonably-priced product that is almost as good as it's brand-name equivalent. Smart shoppers call this a steal!

Think-Think-Think Then Purchase. As a rule of thumb, postpone purchases, specially the ones that do not spell the difference between life and death. Maybe you don't need splurge on that fancy handbag or diver's watch right now. The three things to think of are:

1) Can I do without this for the mean time?
2) Is there an equivalent that is just as good but less expensive?
3) Will holding off on this purchase now, allow me to get something even better in the long run?

If your answer to all these questions is a 'yes', then walk away from the display window. This kind of attitude inculcates the discipline needed to spare yourself the financial woes associated with compulsive and impulsive buying.

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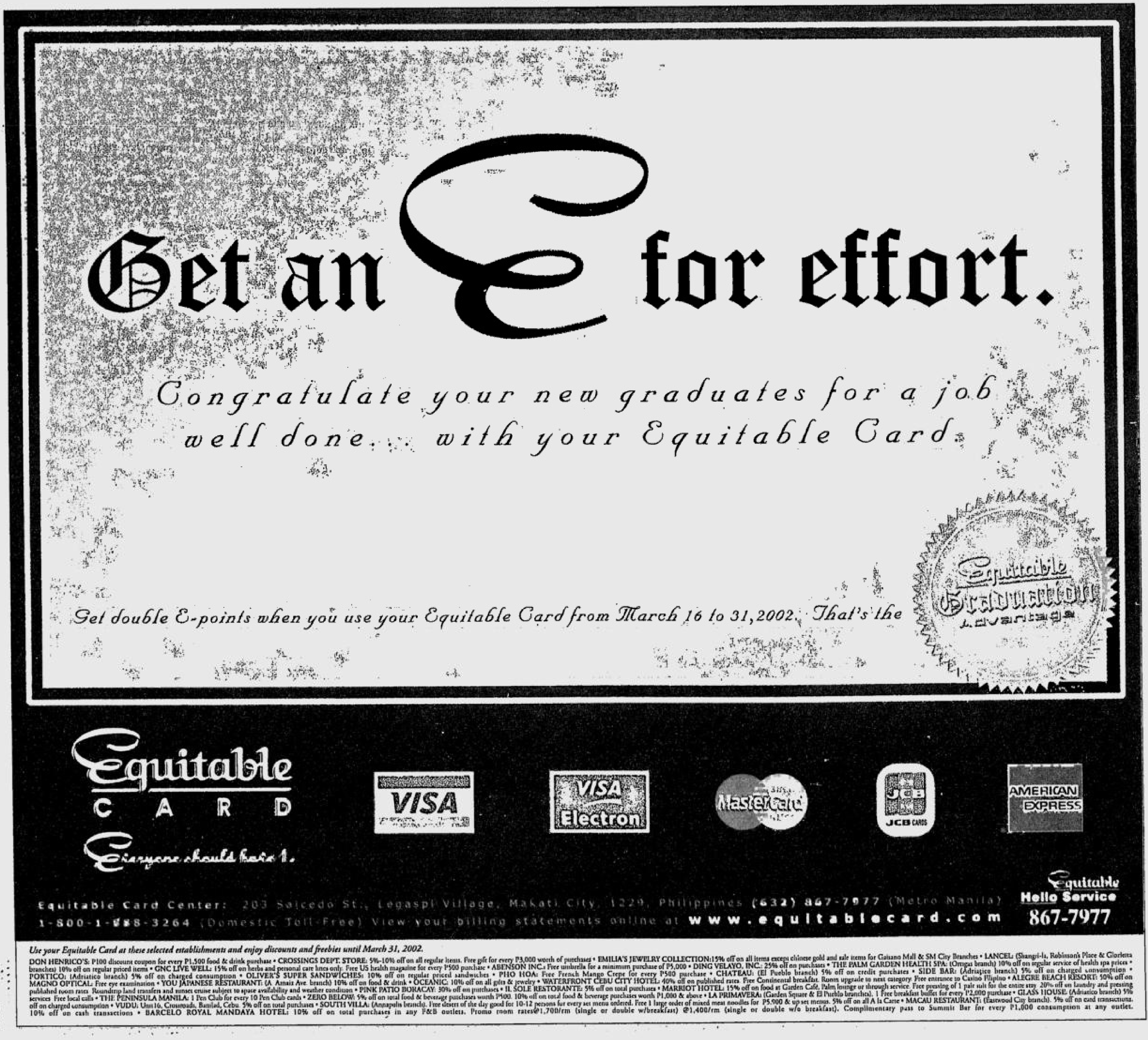
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4 Green Berets enter combat zone in Basilan

STORY ON PAGE A2

Reds announce Holy Week truce

By C. Pablo and M. Marfil, *in Manila* **and N. Burgos Jr.,** *PDI Visayas Bureau*

EVEN without a ceasefire declaration by the government, communist rebels will observe a truce next week in deference to the country's observance of the Holy Week.

"The Holy Week is important to our

REDS/A18

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

UP tops bar exams

By Michael Lim Ubac

FOR THE third straight year, the University of the Philippines has maintained its edge over the country's other law schools by securing the top spot in the 2001 bar examinations.

Scoring an average of 93.80 percent, UP law graduate Rodolfo A. Ponferrada secured first place. Ateneo de Manila University (AdMU) law

UP/A21

e-mail: feedback@inquirer.com.ph Wednesday, March 20, 2002 ★★ 56 pages / 4 sections / vol.17 / no. 102 P15 website: www.inq7.net

1,700 US troops coming

Big number 'normal' for Balikatan 02-2 set next month

By Martin P. Marfil and Carlito Pablo

EVEN as controversy continues to hound the RP-US Balikatan 02-1, the ground is being set for another joint military exercise in Central Luzon involving as many as 1,700 US troops and 2,900 Filipino soldiers.

"We are now in the preparation stage for Balikatan 02-2," Armed Forces spokesperson Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan said at a briefing yesterday. He said "liaison and coordinating parties" were "engaged in talks with their Filipino counterparts" to "thresh out details" for the new exercise set on April 22-May 6.

National Security Adviser Roilo Golez said it was "very, very normal" for a big number of US troops to participate in a joint military exercise in the country.

"In the previous Balikatan exercises, thousands participated," Golez pointed out. "In fact, in Balikatan 02-1 the number is very small compared to the Balikatan exercises in the past."

But he said there was no definite date yet for the forthcoming exercise, which, according to President Macapagal-Arroyo's spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao, would be conducted in Fort Magsaysay in Laur, Nueva Ecija.

Adan said Balikatan 02-2 was aimed at enhancing the AFP's

1,700 US/ A18

ACROSS the areas of conflict into the woods, American soldiers make their way on Monday to Lantawan town where they rescued three wounded Filipino soldiers ambushed by Abu Sayyaf bandits.

EDWIN BACASMAS

House to block Mark Jimenez extradition?

By Christine Avendaño, Juliet Javellana and Dona Pazzibugan

A CONSTITUTIONAL crisis will erupt if the courts allow Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez to be extradited, a ranking congressman warned yesterday.

"What will block his extradition in the end are constitutional provisions," the House official, who requested anonymity, told the INQUIRER.

Jimenez, whom deposed President Joseph Estrada once famously described as a "corporate genius," was indicted in 1999 in Florida for tax evasion, mail fraud and illegal campaign contributions.

The official said if it came to a House vote, congressmen would be likely to vote against extradition because "this amounts to his expulsion."

"Effectively he's still a congressman," the official said. "He continues to function as a congressman so how can he be extradited?" In the event Congress will not heed a court decision to allow extradition, a "constitutional crisis" would arise, he added.

But another House official, Deputy Speaker for the Visayas Raul Gonzalez, said Congress could not block the extradition, if the courts upheld the US request to extradite Jimenez.

"I don't think there's anything Congress can do to protect him. We cannot block his extradition," Gonzalez told the INQUIRER.

HOUSE/A19

AFP looking for 4 tons of explosives

THE ARMED Forces chief of staff yesterday confirmed reports that authorities were looking for more than four tons of explosives—twice the amount used in the Oklahoma City bombing—that a suspected Indonesian terrorist might have bought in the country.

"We are continuing the search. There is no cause for alarm," Gen. Diomedio Villanueva said. He declined to give details, saying "these are operational matters."

Fathur Rohman al-Ghozi, a 31-year-old Indonesian who was arrested on Jan. 15 in Quiapo, Manila, reportedly bought the explosives in Cebu City for terrorist attacks on US targets in Singapore and other places.

After his arrest, Al-Ghozi led authorities to a ton of explosives, bomb materials and a cache of weapons buried behind a mosque in General Santos City.

But Prosecutor Geronimo L. Sy, who helped interrogate Al-

AFP/A18

And 300 more going to Basilan

US NAVY PHOTO

US Navy Seals train RP's Naval Special Warfare Unit in "Fast Rope Infiltration and Exfiltration System."

By Carlito Pablo, Juliet L. Javellana and Martin P. Marfil

THE GOVERNMENT will undertake public consultations on whether the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the RP-US Balikatan 02-1 should be amended to allow the proposed deployment of 300 more American troops, National Security Adviser Roilo Golez said yesterday.

"We're going to be transparent about this, just like (the way) we handled (the joint military exercise)," Golez said in a chance interview with Malacañang reporters. But he stressed that the request, supposedly made by the United States, to raise the number of US forces in Mindanao from the "projected" 660 officers and men stipulated in the TOR had yet to reach the higher levels of government.

"All these suggestions coming from the different sectors are going to be accommodated, especially in the area of civic action, infrastructure, medical action," Golez said.

But US Embassy spokesperson Karen Kelly said the US government did not make a formal request for the additional deployment of American troops.

Negros Occidental Rep. Jose Apolinario Lozada Jr. said that unlike President Macapagal-Arroyo who said Monday that she saw nothing unusual in the deployment, a number of legislators were concerned.

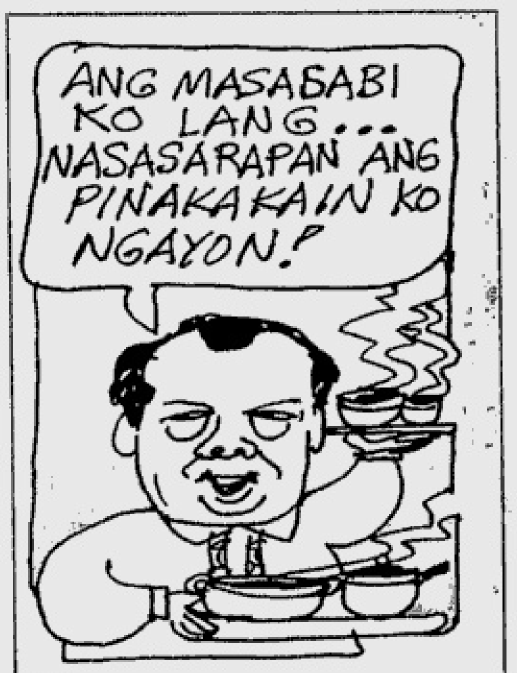
He said the House committee on foreign relations and the congressional oversight committee on the implementation of the RP-US Visiting Forces Agreement would ask the government for a formal inquiry on whether such a request was indeed made and proper procedures were now being complied with.

Lozada, who chairs both committees, said a number of committee members had phoned him to raise the need for a formal inquiry.

The additional US troops will supposedly perform civic work in Basilan, the main theater of operations against the Abu Sayyaf. But various sectors have raised suspicion that this indicated the US government's long-term plans in the country.

Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan, spokesperson for the Armed Forces of the Philippines, said

AND/A18



ANG MASASABI KO LANG... NASASARAPAN ANG PINAKAKAIN KO NGAYON!

Erap crony now glorifies Gloria

By Juliet L. Javellana

AFTER having shrugged off the US demand "to extradite him expeditiously," conveyed by the chief of the US Federal Bureau of Investigation, Manila Rep. Mark B. Jimenez yesterday clammed up.

"I have no comment. I'd rather go to the barangays to feed the children," Jimenez, whose real name is Mario

ERAP/A21

DFA blames shortage on 'upsurge' of Pinoys leaving RP

By Christine Herrera, Juliet Javellana and Clarissa S. Batino

THERE may be a shortage of new passports, but there is no shortage of excuses.

After suggesting the other day that the Bangko Sentral was to blame, the Department of Foreign Affairs yesterday pointed to the "unusual upsurge" in the number of Filipinos wanting to work abroad as the cause of the "serious shortage."

"The unusual upsurge in the number of applicants was way beyond our expectation. Many people wanted to get out of the country," said DFA spokesperson Victoriano Lecaros. "That's the culprit."

But the chair of the House foreign relations committee placed the blame squarely on the reported turf war at the DFA and the "lack of foresight" of its officials.

Negros Occidental Rep. Jose Apolinario Lozada Jr. said his committee would conduct an inquiry into the matter, noting that scores of overseas contract workers were stranded in various parts of the globe because of the shortage.

Bangko Sentral Gov. Rafael Buenaventura categorically denied the country's central bank was behind the shortfall.

"We told the DFA not to blame us because we are just the printer and we do not even earn from printing the passports. This is purely public service that we try to do as efficiently as possible," Buenaventura said yesterday.

The DFA estimates passport demand at some 9,000 a day.

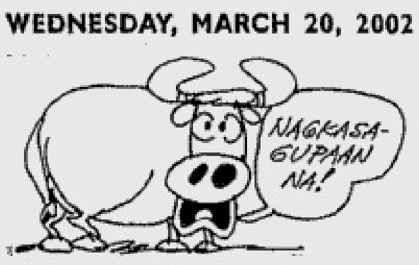
Lecaros told reporters that as a result of the unexpected increase, the three-month buffer stock of blank passports had already been used up. Stock that was designed to last till May is already gone, he said, adding that the stock allotted for the first quarter of the year was used to cover the shortfall in the last quarter of 2001.

On Monday, however, Lecaros said the head office noticed the shortage only in January.

"We were hoping that the unusual demand in the last quarter last year would subside but it is consistently increasing. *Maraming lumalabas ng bansa* (many are leaving for abroad),"

DFA/A17

Second FRONT PAGE


NAGKASA-GUPAAN NA!

Sinister forces behind SC impeachment bid, says solon

"WELL-FUNDED and sinister forces" are behind the impeachment complaint against the Supreme Court, Deputy Speaker Raul Gonzalez said yesterday.

Gonzalez said this became obvious when the complaint of lawyer Crispin T. Reyes, head of the Anti-Graft League of the Philippines, was published in full as a paid advertisement in the INQUIRER.

The 86-year-old Reyes angrily denied Gonzalez' charge, and claimed to have paid for the ad with his retirement money.

The one-and-a-half page advertisement cost P163,000.

Gonzalez, a former House prosecutor in the impeachment trial of jailed ex-Pesident Joseph Estrada, said the "orchestrated attacks" by Estrada on the Supreme Court and the judiciary were designed to "create chaos and turmoil."

Reyes has asked the House minority to endorse his complaint against Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. and all the other SC justices for alleged culpable violation of the Constitution when they legalized the assumption of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to the presidency.

Davide has called a press conference today "to make an important announcement regarding the recent accusations" of Estrada who claimed that the SC chief had lobbied to be appointed.

Also yesterday, national police chief Leandro Mendoza said the Estrada lawyers whose services he had terminated have been banned from visiting him at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center, citing rules of detention.

"Since they have been fired, they no longer enjoy the privilege of a lawyer," Mendoza told reporters.

Estrada's Partido ng Masang Pilipino immediately protested the police, claiming Estrada needed access to his "trusted legal advisers."

Estrada dismissed his lawyers two weeks ago, in effect withdrawing from participation in the trial. ***Juliet Labog-Javellana, TJ Burgonio and Volt Contreras***

4 Abus slain in Basilan clash

UPPER MANGGAS, Basilan—Abu Sayyaf bandits loosed grenades and small arms fire on an Army patrol yesterday, injuring two within earshot of United States troops and prompting four Green Berets to enter the combat zone to try to retrieve the wounded.

Officials said at least four Abu Sayyaf bandits were killed in the ongoing firefight which erupted yesterday morning in Barangay Makiri, Lantawan, Basilan where US troops and local politicians were discussing earlier clashes nearby in a crisis committee meeting.

Six other bandits were also captured as the military tightened a security noose around the island to prevent gunmen from escaping, the officials said.

US troops were not involved in the fighting, they said.

Maj. Noel Detoyato, spokesperson for the Southern Command, said the group that the government troops had engaged was the same band of 15 Abu Sayyaf members under Hamsiraji Sali involved in a clash last Sunday that left three soldiers wounded.

He said the clashes proved that the bandit group was feeling the heat of the offensive.

He said there was no sighting of US hostages Martin and Gracia Burnham.

The military has focused its search for the hostages in a small area of Lantawan-Maluso-Sumisip in Basilan.

Lt. Julius Navales, who was one of those who survived yesterday's encounter, said they were patrolling an area near the Kumalarang river when they chanced upon the bandits.

After frantic radio calls amid the distant din, four US soldiers were told that 30 or so Filipino troops were surprised by about seven rebels near the meeting at the town hall of Atong Atong.

Platoon commander Lt. Lemuel Beduya later told the Associated Press he immediately fell with a serious head wound and one of his men was shot in the arm.

"I was calling on the radio and then I met a hail of bullets—pop, pop, pop," Beduya said later as US troops treated his seriously bleeding head wound. "They had a sniper with them. I asked my men to stay and not withdraw. I thought my time had already come."

The US soldiers loaded into a blue pickup truck, followed by Filipino troops in another truck and an armored personnel carrier, to determine whether they could evacuate the injured.

Although they were turned back by fighting, the response marked the second time US troops moved into combat zones in an attempt to help wounded Filipinos.

Last Friday night, two US Pave Hawk helicopters evacuated three soldiers wounded and hauled out one dead after a clash with the Abu Sayyaf in the same area as yesterday's fight.

Detoyato said six suspected Abu Sayyaf bandits had been captured in Upper Matikang in Lantawan early yesterday. The six were arrested while trying to pass themselves off as civilians.

Basilan Army Commander Col. Alexander Aleo said sketches and photographs of suspected Abu Sayyaf rebels and their supporters have been circulated in Basilan towns to restrict their movements.

"It would be difficult for them not to be apprehended after several layers of operating troops (were placed) on guard in the hinterlands," Aleo said.

About 660 US troops, including 160 Special Forces members, are in Mindanao to train Filipino soldiers battling the Abu Sayyaf, a Muslim extremist group holding the Burnhams along with Filipino nurse Ediborah Yap.

The Abu Sayyaf, thought to number 60 or so fighters on Basilan island, have been linked in the past to the international al-Qaida network.

The US soldiers are armed and are allowed into combat zones but can only fire in self-defense. The Special Forces members on Basilan are to stay at all times with Filipino commanders and have reportedly acted in combat zones only to treat Filipino wounded.

Filipino soldiers say US night flight capability, particularly for medical evacuation, is crucial. Previously, some wounded have bled to death while being driven or hauled out of combat zones at night.

The US soldiers responding to the firefight yesterday first reached a hilltop, sandbagged a tactical command post at the edge of the combat zone where they were met by an armored personnel carrier and tried to gain access to the injured.

US Army Capt. John Barrow, who accompanied Army battalion commander Col. Reynaldo Ordoñez to the scene, said "it was too dangerous to get closer" and they turned back.

Filipino soldiers then evacuated their wounded colleagues through the coconut groves to a beach. They were picked up by a speedboat and evacuated to a seaside clearing out of the fighting to meet the US troops.

"Let's rock n' roll," shouted one Green Beret, driving and listening to blaring Latin pop music on the truck stereo as another fixed his assault rifle on the wild coconut groves whizzing past the window on the way to the clearing.

US Sgt. Robert Burton administered an intravenous drip and comforting words to Beduya. Another American set out a fuchsia flag to signal a helicopter landing zone while one more worked the radio to call in the Army Huey helicopters for the evacuation. ***With reports from Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau, and Martin P. Marfil, Metro Manila, and AFP***

Rice import lib stalled

THE GOVERNMENT has postponed the liberalization of rice importation for another year at least.

Malacañang said the National Food Authority will continue to be the sole rice importer this year.

But instead of importing rice duty free, the NFA would now pay a 50 percent tariff.

Presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said the government hopes that this would discourage rice smuggling.

He said the zero tariff before makes it easy for smugglers to fabricate NFA permits.

The government earlier announced that it will now allow traders and farmers' groups to import rice.

Tiglao said officials realized that farmers' cooperatives are not yet ready to undertake importation.

In yesterday's Cabinet meeting, NFA Administrator Anthony Abad said some 39,000 metric tons of imported rice will arrive in late May or June.

He said the Philippine International Trading Corp., the government's importing arm, will deliver all the stocks to NFA warehouses as food security reserves.

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NAIA 3 PROJECT

Ombudsman drops case vs Alvarez, other execs

By Michael Lim Ubac

TRANSPORTATION Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez, his predecessor Vicente Rivera Jr. and several others have been cleared by the Ombudsman of any wrongdoing in the Terminal 3 project at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

Ombudsman Aniano Desierto cited insufficient evidence in dismissing the charges against them of plunder, graft, perjury, subordination of perjury, obstruction of justice and violation of the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees.

Besides Alvarez, Desierto exonerated former transport secretaries Rivera and the late Arturo Enrile; former Naia general manager and Naia 3 project director Antonio Gana; Manila International Airport Authority manager Edgardo Manda; and MIAA assistant director Elpidio Mendoza.

Also cleared were project engineers Diosdado Acob, Reynaldo Roa, Llewelyn Villamor, Jose Gabriel Benedicto, Jose Go Jr.; Wintrack Builders officials Diosdado Silva, Ronaldo Clavano, Rogelio Mercado; and seven officials of the Philippine Airport and Grounds Services.

The decision to exonerate was based on the recommendation of the Ombudsman's Evaluation and Preliminary Investigation Bureau and the Office of Legal Affairs.

'Regularity'

Both offices found that there was "regularity" in the award of the original concession agreements and the three subsequent amendments.

The respondent public officials and private individuals were charged with allegedly conspiring to create a monopoly in air-related services.

Alvarez was charged because his wife owned shares of stock in Wintrack Builders, a sub-contractor of the Philippine International Air Terminals Co. which had won the contract to build the terminal.

In his defense, Alvarez said his wife had divested all her 119,200 Wintrack shares after his appointment as secretary of the Department of Transportation and Communication.

Desierto said Alvarez could not be dragged into the case as he assumed the DOTC post on Jan. 23, 2001, "long after the four contracts were entered into and executed by the DOTC/MIAA and Piatco."

ALVAREZ

Desierto said Enrile and Rivera were presumed to have performed their functions "with regularity, and strong evidence is necessary to rebut the presumption, which the complainants failed to present."

He also stressed that the Ombudsman investigators had found that the contracts had been subjected to a congressional which had found "the award to Piatco to be proper and valid, and the contract regular and aboveboard."

Did not preclude COA

The Ombudsman clarified, however, that his decision did not preclude the Commission on Audit conducting a special audit of the contracts.

He said he had referred the plunder case to the COA for the latter to determine "if money was lost as a result of the assailed transactions."

In the absence of such a finding by the COA, his office had no choice but to dismiss the charges, Desierto said.

The charge of plunder involved the alleged overpayment of more than P56 million to Wintrack "through allegedly bloated work accomplishments." The amount was allegedly deducted by Piatco from the guaranteed annual payments that should have been due the government.

Alvarez said he was being dragged into the picture by mere association, "without even alleging (my) criminal knowledge or participation."

The plunder charge collapsed after Alvarez's main accuser, Venner Mojica Mendoza, disowned an affidavit he was supposed to have made earlier.

The Ombudsman had initiated criminal proceedings against Alvarez and the others based on separate complaints from Perfecto Yasay, Jovino G. Lorenzo Jr. and the MIAA-Association of Service Operators (Maso) last year.

The complainants had assailed four contracts for the construction of the Naia Terminal 3.

The project aims to put up a state-of-the-art international passenger terminal at the Naia through a build-operate-transfer scheme.

It was awarded to Piatco, an international consortium headed by its president, Henry T. Go, in 1997.

The Ombudsman probe focused on the legal questions concerning the regularity of the contracts, the allegedly huge payments given to Wintrack and whether Alvarez had unlawfully utilized his office or unduly benefited from the contracts.

The EPIB investigators' report said that except for Rivera, Gana, Go and Yong, all the 33 other respondents "had no participation whatsoever in the execution" of the contracts.

Their signatures did not appear in the four assailed contracts, the probers said.

The EPIB panel also found that the provisions of Republic Act 6957—the law requiring 60 percent capitalization for utility firms—and RA 7718—law on public bidding—had been complied with.

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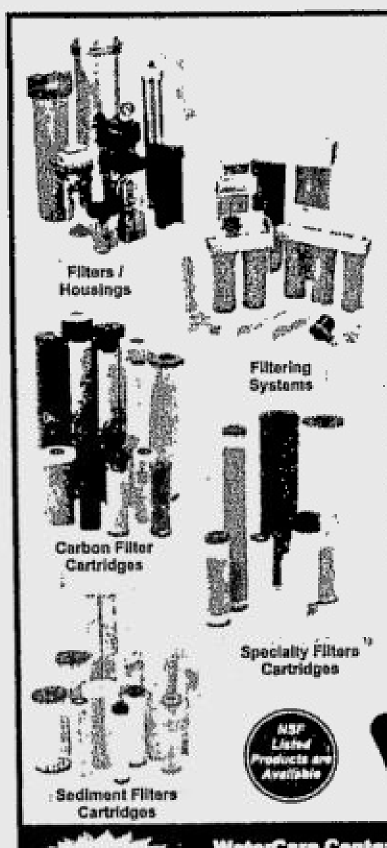

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HK man convicted for scalding RP maid

HONG KONG—A Hong Kong surveyor has been convicted of assault for scalding his Filipino live-in maid with hot tea, court officials and local media said Tuesday.

Lau Siu-wah, 42, is now in jail and faces sentencing on April 3, after he was found guilty Monday of one count of assault that caused bodily harm, court officials said.

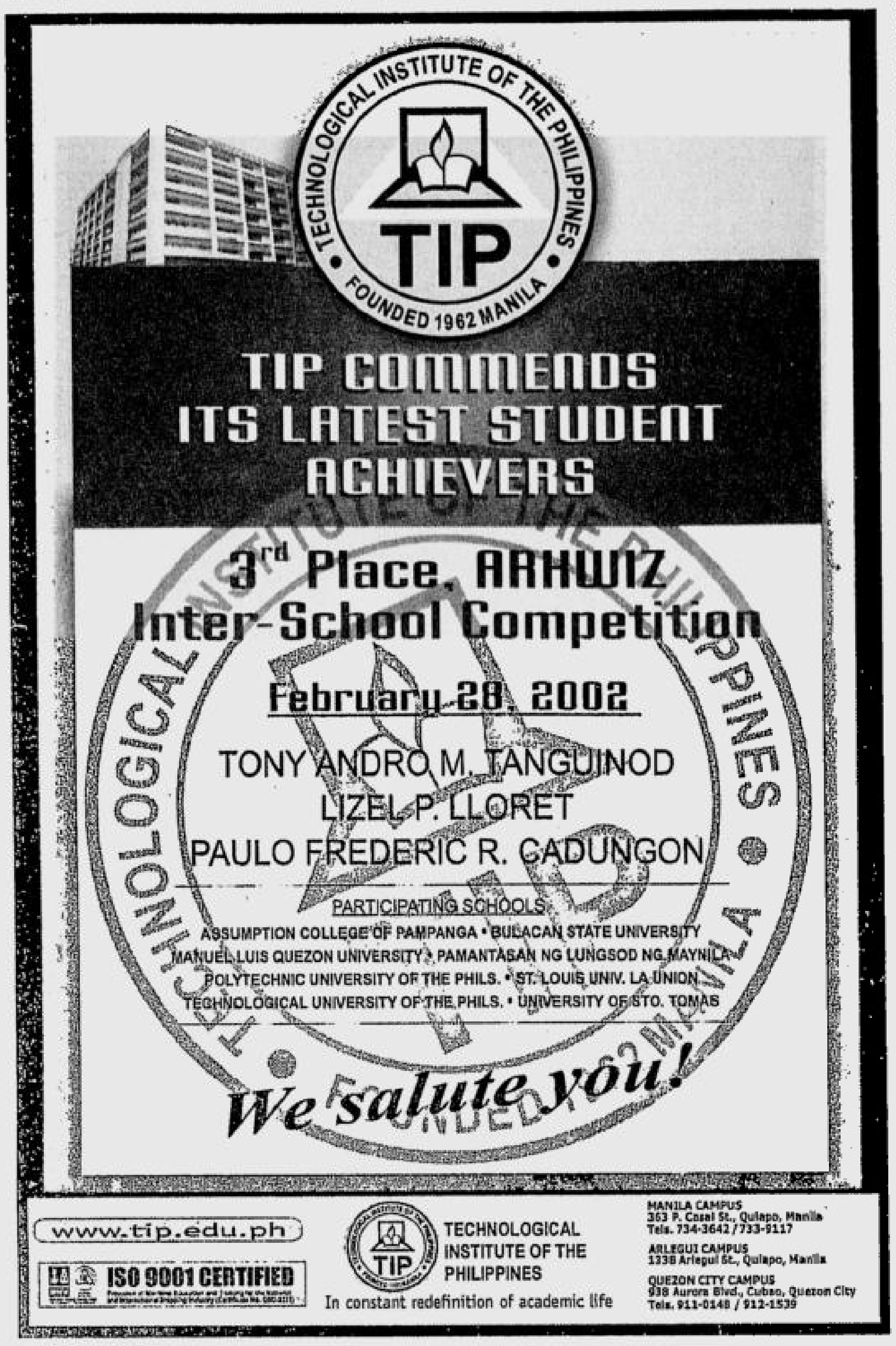
Lau splashed hot tea over Navarro after she refused to sign an agreement deducting HK$300($38.50) from her salary for failing to record her chores in a log book last April, according to accounts of the trial in local newspapers.

Navarro was scalded on the right side of her abdomen and her right thigh, the reports said.

Lau then asked Navarro to pack up and took the maid back to the employment agency that had placed her with him, the reports said.

Court officials would confirm only Lau's conviction and the date of his sentencing.

An estimated 180,000 Filipinos and 66,000 Indonesians—and smaller numbers of Nepalese and Thais—work as live-in maids in Hong Kong to support poor families back home. They get a minimum wage of HK$3,670($471) per month, plus room and board. *AP*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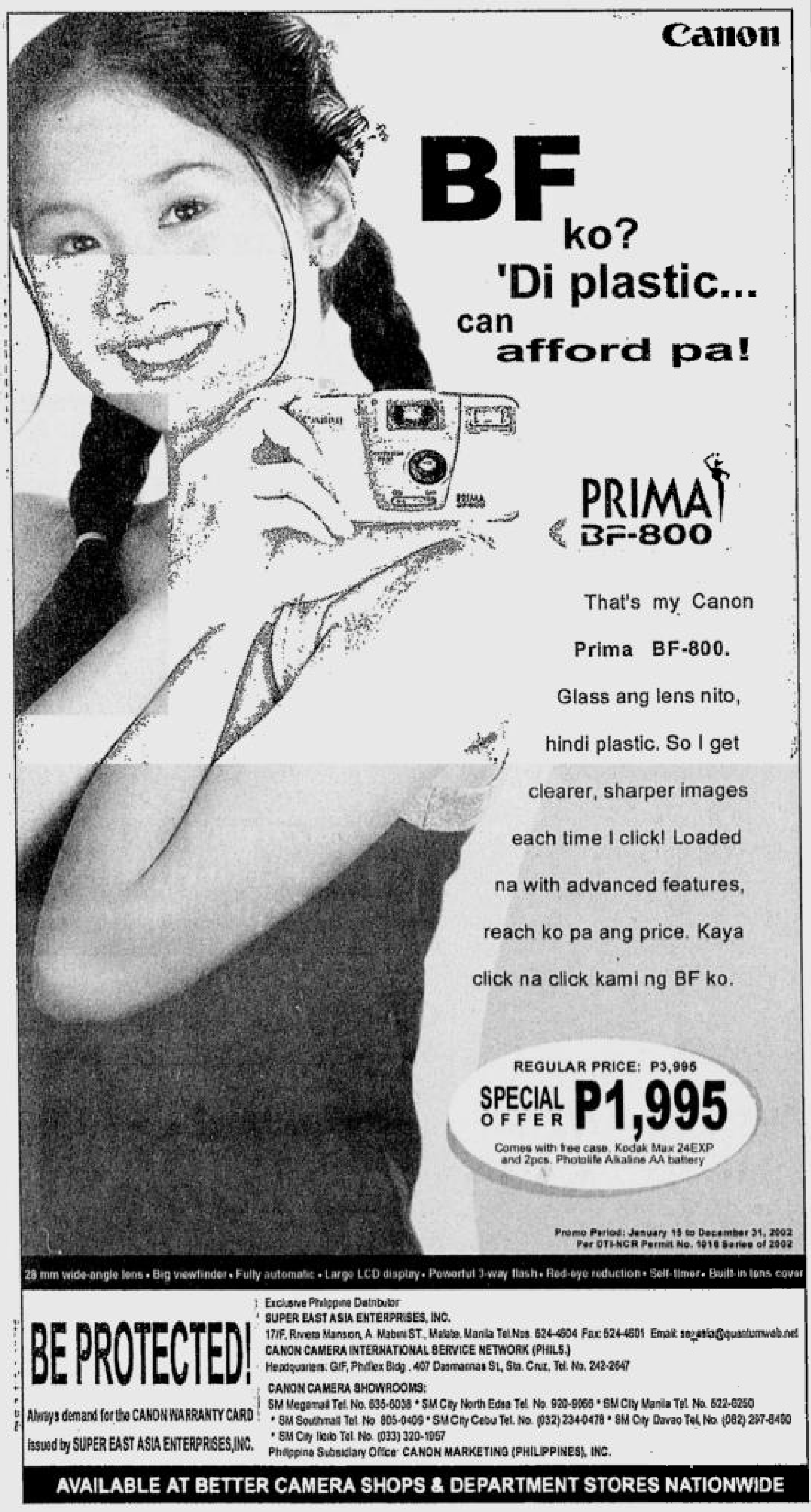
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Alvarez lied to CA, says dismissed usec

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

A DISMISSED environment official who has become the main opposition to Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez's confirmation at the congressional Commission on Appointments has accused Alvarez of lying under oath during the congressional hearings.

Peter Abaya, whom Alvarez had relieved as director of the Environmental Management Bureau, cited in his statement at the CA hearing on March 12 two instances in which Alvarez had allegedly lied to the commissioners.

The CA has been focusing on Abaya's opposition to Alvarez's confirmation. He is one of 23 parties trying to block the confirmation of Alvarez who was re-appointed by President Macapagal-Arroyo last Monday.

The 36-year-old Abaya, son of Cavite Rep. Plaridel Abaya, claimed that Alvarez had filed trumped-up charges against him so he could install his own man at the EMB.

First, Alvarez had allegedly presented an expert witness whom he allegedly claimed was "a Ph.D. graduate from Stanford University."

The witness, Michael E. Nunez, himself corrected Alvarez when he stood up to speak, saying he actually got his Ph.D. in Environmental Health and Safety from the Western State University in Missouri. Abaya said Nunez was lying, and claimed that Missouri did not have a Western State University but only a Missouri Western State College which does not offer Ph.D. programs.

ALVAREZ

"We have also not found a single school in the US that offered the one-year degree program like what Dr. Nunez has," Abaya told the CA.

Abaya said Alvarez told another lie when he said Nunez was not consultant of his and that he has not engaged his services.

He presented a special order from Alvarez designating Nunez July 23, 2001 as team leader of the composite hazardous materials (Hazmat) and geologic/hydrogeologic assessment teams which has been conducting an investigation into the proposed Tiwi Solid Waste Injection Project of the Tiwi Geothermal Plant in Albay.

Abaya said Nunez did not appear in succeeding hearings on Feb. 27 and March 12.

"The case against me started with one lie and progressed to a never-ending cascade of lies and dirty tactics," Abaya said.

Abaya was the EMB director until last September when Alvarez relieved him, charging that he had issued pre-shipment importation clearances in the year 2000 in favor of allegedly unregistered importers of ozone-depleting substances (ODS).

Alvarez said the importations were in excess of the volumes allowed under Department Administrative Order (DAO) 2000-28 or the Chemical Control Order for ODS.

On Monday, Alvarez personally inspected two private-run toxic waste treatment facilities in Cavite and Bulacan which have been the subject of complaints by residents, and vowed to order their immediate closure if found violating environmental standards.

Alvarez first went to Imus, Cavite, yesterday to inspect the compound of Haz-Serv Corp. in Barangay Anabu.

Subdivision residents of Anabu I-A have complained that the company had built the treatment facility in their neighborhood without public consultation.

Luciano Jornilla, chief of the Region 4 environmental impact assessment division, reported to Alvarez that Haz-Serv Corp. was still operating within the limits of its permit.

During the spot inspection, only about 125 tons of metal dust sludge was found in the compound, way below the limit of 300 tons stipulated in the transport permit given by the DENR.

The solvents also did not exceed the amount allowable under the law.

An aide of Alvarez said it was possible that Haz-Serve personnel may have brought out some of the stored wastes after a report of the residents' complaint came out in the INQUIRER.

Stay out of Comelec row, pols told

By Blanche S. Rivera

SAYING politicians only make things more difficult, the private elections watchdog National Movement for Free Elections wants the members of Congress to stop intervening in the Commission on Elections mess.

Namfrel secretary general Guillermo Luz instead urged civil society to take an active role in resolving the infighting in the election body so "people with vested interests" would not have to intervene.

Luz made the remark after leaders of Congress and the 10 political parties gathered the warring Comelec officials in a "reconciliation meeting" at the Manila Hotel last week.

Luz said he has always been "very skeptical" about the intervention of senators and congressmen in the Comelec war as these "politicians stand to benefit" from the leadership of the Comelec.

"It should be civil society and no other group. If there are more politicians (in the scenario), things will get very difficult," Luz said after a meeting with civil society groups in Ateneo de Manila University Monday.

Joel Rocamora, president of Akbayan, shared Namfrel's inhibitions in the intervention of politicians, saying this violated the independence of the Comelec as a constitutional body equal with other branches of government.

SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

MERCANTILE LAW (CORPORATION LAW)—Juridical personality of a corporation—A corporation, upon coming into existence, is invested by law with a personality separate and distinct from those persons composing it as well as from any other legal entity to which it may be related. By this attribute, a stockholder may not, generally, be made to answer for acts or liabilities of the said corporation, and vice versa. This separate and distinct personality is, however, merely a fiction created by law for convenience and to promote the ends of justice. For this reason, it may not be used or invoked for ends subversive to the policy and purpose behind its creation or which could not have been intended by law to which it owes its being. This is particularly true when the fiction is used to defeat public convenience, justify wrong, protect fraud, defend crime, confuse legitimate legal or judicial issues, perpetrate deception or otherwise circumvent the law. This is likewise true where the corporate entity is being used as an alter ego, adjunct, or business conduit for the sole benefit of the stockholders or of another corporate entity. In all the cases, the notion of corporate entity will be pierced or disregarded with reference to the particular transaction involved. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Quisumbing, Second Division, Land Bank of the Philippines v. Court of Appeals, G.R. No. 127181, September 4, 2001.

DIGEST BY R.B. VERA

ERRATUM

The featured item in SM Supermarket's Total Lower Cost for March 15 to April 4, published last March 15: SWIFT Corned Beef, 150 g. at TLC Price of P16.50 and Reg. Price of P17.50, should have been at TLC Price of P18.50 and Reg. Price of P19.50. Our apologies.

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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Notice is hereby given that decisions were promulgated in the following cases on the date indicated:

DARAB Case No.	Title	Date Promulgated
5790	Heirs of Dionisio Amador, rep. by Herminigildo Amador vs. Rogelio de Mesa, et al.	May 18, 1998
6606	Jojo Almandres, et al., vs. Estanislao Espinosa	June 19, 2000

Counsels and parties to these cases, especially the following persons:

DARAB Case No.	Party/Counsel	Last Known Address
5790	Rogelio de Mesa	Lower Maname, Sabang, Naic, Cavite
	Atty. Alan A. Tan	Protestant Lawyers' League of the Phil. Unit A Shalom Center 1660 L.M. Guerrero St., Malate, Manila
6606	Estanislao Espinosa Atty. Froilan Siobal	Poblacion, Infanta, Pangasinan Room 204 Puzon Bldg., E. Rodriguez Ave. cor. Gilmore St., Quezon City

are hereby advised to get a copy of the decisions from the DARAB Secretariat, DAR Adjudication Board, Diliman, Quezon City. After the lapse of thirty (30) days from the date of posting of this notice, without any Motion for Reconsideration or Petition for Review being filed, an Entry of Judgment shall be made and the decision on these cases shall become final and executory.

March 7, 2002, Diliman, Quezon City.

Acting Executive Director
DARAB Secretariat

March 13 & 20, 2002 – Inquirer

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, March 20, 2002
5th Week of Lent
1st Reading: Dn 3:14-20, 91-92, 95
Gospel: Jn 8:31-42

Jesus went on to say to the Jews who believed in him: "You will be my true disciples if you keep my word. Then you will know the truth and the truth will make you free." They answered him, "We are the descendants of Abraham and have never been slaves of anyone. What do you mean by saying: You will be free?"

Jesus answered them, "Truly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave. But the slave doesn't stay in the house forever; the son stays forever. So, if the Son makes you free, you will be really free.

I know that you are the descendants of Abraham; yet you want to kill me because my word finds no place in you. For my part I speak of what I have seen in the Father's presence, but you do what you have learned from your father."

They answered him, "Our father is Abraham." Then Jesus said, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do as Abraham did. But now you want to kill me, the one who tells you the truth—the truth that I have learned from God. That is not what Abraham did; what you are doing are the works of your father."

The Jews said to him, "We are not illegitimate children; we have one Father, God." Jesus replied, "If God were your Father you would love me, for I came forth from God, and I am here. And I didn't come by my own decision, but it was he himself who sent me."

Commentary

Seeing the truth is often painful but always freeing, because in the light of truth I can see more clearly the next step. If I resist truth because it will disturb me or take away what I've got, then I'm a slave of my securities. It could be the truth about myself, relationships, business affairs. It could be letting go of my child's-eye faith for an understanding less comforting but more adult. For John's audience, the truth was realizing that to be of Abraham's race was not the same thing as being a child of Abraham—a person with enough faith to leave homeland and all securities behind when God opens a new road. For us, we could say that being an active Church member, a priest, a religious, counts for nothing in itself. What matters is to "keep Christ's word," live the gospel. (This theme is continued tomorrow).

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Pinoys face tough life in Sabah

KOTA KINABALU, Malaysia—Eighteen-year-old Celby prowls a busy street in Kota Kinabalu, hawking contraband cigarettes to the drivers of passing vehicles and cars parked at the sidewalk.

For several years now, the Filipino has made a living as an itinerant street vendor, selling smuggled goods which he says are brought in from the nearby international offshore financial island of Labuan.

"My parents are corn farmers in Zamboanga but life has been difficult, so we came to Sabah five years ago. Life is good here. It is easy for us to make money if we are hard-working," he said.

Celby is among hundreds of thousands of Filipino refugees and economic migrants who have settled in the Malaysian state of Sabah on Borneo island to escape the hardship of the southern Philippines, which is just a few hours away by boat.

But the teenager has no valid permit to stay in Sabah and—along with many others—has been on the run since Feb. 26, when the state began one of its biggest sweeps against illegal immigrants in decades.

In the past two weeks, armed security personnel have bulldozed hundreds of immigrant colonies throughout the state and demolished thousands of rickety wooden houses built on stilts over shallow waters.

More than 7,000 Filipinos have been deported from Sabah this year, with some 3,000 to be sent home in the next few days.

Officials say there are an estimated 100,000-150,000 illegals among some 600,000 immigrants in Sabah, but thousands of Filipinos slip into the state undetected each year.

There is also a permanent community of migrant Filipinos who have acquired Malaysian citizenship since the exodus began in the 1970s, when Mindanao island was wracked by a bloody separatist rebellion which has yet to be fully resolved despite peace efforts by Manila.

The growing immigrant population is a dilemma for Sabah. The state blames the illegals for social problems such as a rising crime-rate and the spread of diseases but also uses them as a source of much-needed cheap labor.

There is an estimated one Filipino to five Malaysians in the state and authorities are worried that Filipinos may one day outnumber the locals.

A slowing economy and security fears after Sept. 11 terror attacks in the United States, and kidnappings by Filipino Muslim rebels from Malaysian resort islands in 2000, gave impetus to Sabah's renewed crackdown.

But some officials say it provides only temporary relief and there can be no real end to the problem until peace is found in Mindanao.

"To solve the immigrant problem in Sabah, we must get to the root of the problem, which is the conflict going on in southern Philippines," said Yong Teck Lee, a former Sabah chief minister.

"This demands a peaceful solution, a political settlement and a massive rehabilitation exercise including land reforms. Principally, the ball is in the court of the Philippines government."

Apart from occasional joint patrols, Yong said there has been little cooperation between Malaysia and the Philippines to tackle the issue.

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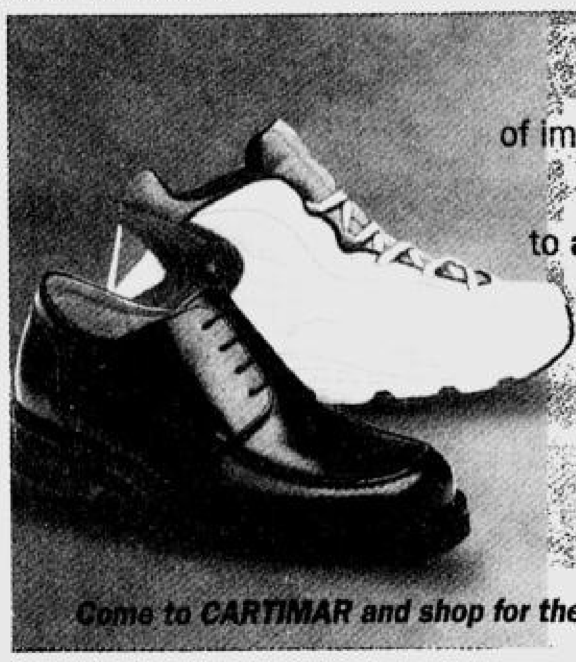

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- Examine the shipping carton carefully. Fake match products are packed in shipping cartons with the following marks:
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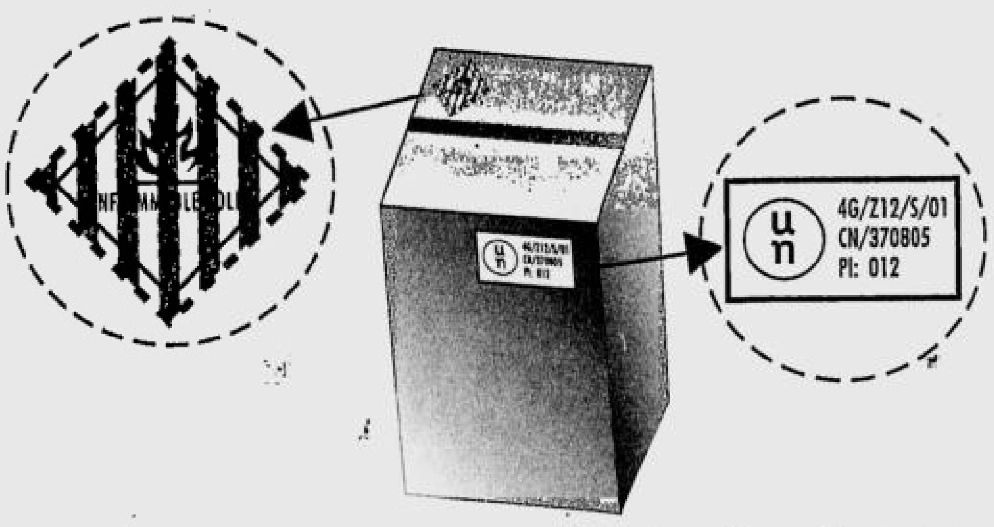
  - Presence of a U/N serial number printed or pasted on the front of the box.



Let it be known that PHIMCO Industries will not hesitate to prosecute individuals who are involved in distributing these fake match products in the country. If you have any information that will lead to the apprehension of these people, please call our Manila office at tel no **532-1534**. A reward will be given.

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Coop blamed for Boracay blackout

SAN JOSE, Antique—Residents of Aklan's 17 towns—including Malay where Boracay Island is located—and two towns in Antique have been complaining of the power blackout since Monday when the National Power Corp. cut off power to the local electric cooperative for failing to settle its debts.

"It has been very difficult for the Aklanons (to live without any electricity). The power outage has also affected the businesses in mainland Aklan," said Aklan Gov. Florencio Miraflores.

He said they asked the representatives of the National Electrification Administration (NEA) to temporarily take over the management and to assume the debts of the Aklan Electric Cooperative (Akelco) to Napocor.

The Napocor disconnected the transmission line to Aklan on Monday after the Akelco failed to pay some P75 million in power bills from December to February.

"We have been receiving complaints from tourists and visitors but we can only shrug our shoulders," said Karen Reina, chair of the Boracay Foundation, an organization of owners of establishments and resorts in the island.

Still, Reina said the effect on the lack of electricity had been minimal because of the generator sets owned by most resort-owners.

But Jimmy Coscolluela, resident manager of Waling Waling Beach Hotel and board member of the Boracay Foundation, said majority of the establishments on the island diligently pay their electricity bills despite high costs and poor service of Akelco.

"Now, we all have to take the brunt and inconvenience in the island because of the mismanagement and corruption within Akelco," Coscolluela said in a press statement.

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PAL defers fare hike

PHILIPPINE Airlines announced yesterday that it was postponing until April 1 the increase in domestic fares earlier authorized by the Civil Aeronautics Board(CAB).

The new rates were supposed to take effect starting tomorrow.

PAL, in a press statement, said the move was taken in response to the clamor from the tourism sector for relief from the Lenten holiday break next week, one of the busiest travel periods of the year.

PAL said it made the decision as a gesture of support for the "tourism economics" policy of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The flag carrier said it hopes the rollback will go a long way in stimulating domestic travel.

With the rollback, PAL will refund the fare difference to passengers who have been already ticketed with the deferred rates.

MESSAGES

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

It is with great pride that I congratulate the citizens of the City of Tabaco on the first anniversary of Tabaco as a Component City of Albay. Cityhood is an honor long overdue Tabaco and its residents, and the launching of the annual *Tabak* Festival should become an effective and essential venue for the new city to showcase its world-class products and enchanting tourist destinations.

Tabaco has long been envied for its bountiful seas that generously yield a great assortment of succulent seafood and for its naturally rich soil fertilized and nurtured by the majestic, if sometimes tempestuous, Mayon Volcano. But more than its well preserved and abundant natural resources, thriving cutlery industry, and superior abaca handicrafts, Tabaco is home skilled craftsmen, accomplished artists, conscientious citizens and leaders, and valiant freedom fighters.

Every child of school age in Tabaco knows by heart the dramatic origin of its name: a father defending the honor of his daughter and the liberty of his people from Spanish colonizers was said to have roared, Itao mo sacoya an tabac co! Tabac co! (Give me my bolo! My bolo!). Indeed, Tabaqueños can be as mild as the pili nut they expertly transform into candies and baked goodies. But if their future and freedom are at stake, they can also be as fiery as the sili they eat so liberally.

This history of bravery and determination is a legacy that "Tabaquenños value, uphold and pass on to their children to entire the progress and development of the City of Tabaco.

CIELO KRISTEL LAGMAN-LUISTRO
Rep. First district of Albay

Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF ALBAY
CITY OF TABACO
OFFICE OF THE CITY MAYOR

Foremost is my gratitude to the people who spent their time, money and talents in making Tabaco City's first ever "TABAK FESTIVAL" possible. This affair is not only a milestone in our evolution from a sleepy town into one of the busiest commercial districts in this part of the country, but also will showcase the rich historical and cultural heritage of the Tabaqueño. We expect that our combined efforts in this celebration will earn for Tabaco a place in the tourism map. We do not celebrate because of the sheer and joy and fun derived from it, the more important aspect rather is that, this festival is the mirror of unity and cooperation of the people. Indeed, celebrations and unity can never be divorced from each other. Celebrations bind us together, serve as energizer and provide the spice that perks up relationships and bonding. In behalf of the beautiful and fun-loving people of Tabaco City I am inviting all to share with us our joy and fun in the different activities during this festival on March 20-24, 2002. Come one, come all. Mabuhay kita gabos asin Dios Mabalos!

ALEX BURCE
City Mayor

Tabak Festival

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DATE	ACTIVITY	VENUE
DAY1	ECUMENICAL SERVICE	Tabaco Int'l Port
March20	TABAK FESTIVAL PRODUCT SHOWCASE	
(Wed.)	-Product Display and Sale	Tabaco Int'l Port
	-Handicraft Product Competition	Tabaco Int'l Port
	KARAWAT BIKOLNON (LARONG PINOY)	Various Venues
	MUTYANG TABAK FESTIVAL-Talent Show	City Terrace
	BEER PLAZA	Tabaco Int'l Port
DAY2	TABAK FESTIVAL PRODUCT SHOWCASE	
March21	-Progression of Day 1 Product Display and Sale	Tabaco Int'l Port
(Thu)	-Culinary Arts Competition	Tabaco Int'l Port
	KARAWAT BIKOLNON (LARONG PINOY)	Various Venues
	MUSICAL EXTRAVAGANZA	Tabaco Int'l Port
	BEER PLAZA	Tabaco Int'l Port
DAY3	TABAK FESTIVAL PRODUCT SHOWCASE	Tabaco Int'l Port
March22	-Progression of Day 2 Product Display and Sale	Poblacion
(Fri)	TABAK FESTIVAL STREET DANCING & COMPETITION	Tabaco Int'l Port
	DISCO SA PIER	Tabaco Int'l Port
	BEER PLAZA	Tabaco Int'l Port
DAY4	TABAK FESTIVAL PRODUCT SHOWCASE	
March23	-Progression of Day 3 Product Display and Sale	Tabaco Int'l Port
(Sat)	DRUM AND BUGLE COMPETITION (ELEM. LEVEL)	Tabaco Int'l Port
	MUTYANG TABAK FESTIVAL-Pageant Night	TNHS
DAY5	TABAK FESTIVAL PRODUCT SHOWCASE	
March24	-Final Day of Product Display & Sale	Tabaco Int'l Port
(Sun)	DRUM AND BUGLE COMPETITION (H.S. LEVEL)	Tabaco Int'l Port
	BAILE DE AMOR	City Terrace

PCGG appeals Olot ruling by Sandigan

By Donna S. Cueto

THE PRESIDENTIAL Commission on Good Government yesterday asked the Sandiganbayan to "set aside" its Feb. 28 resolution lifting the freeze order on the Olot, Leyte property of former first lady Imelda Marcos.

Stressing that there was a valid sequestration order on the Olot resthouse dated March 13, 1986, the PCGG and the Office of the Solicitor General said that anti-graft court's fourth division could not just dismiss it because it was issued with authority from the PCGG.

The Sandiganbayan had earlier junked the PCGG's sequestration order saying that it was essentially "void," having been issued by two PCGG lawyers, and not by a commissioner. The court referred to the March 18, 1986 sequestration order issued by PCGG lawyers based in Leyte—Jose Tan Ramirez and Ben Abella.

It cited the PCGG's own rules and regulations that a PCGG sequestration order could only be issued by at least two PCGG commissioners.

But the PCGG claimed that the March 13, 1986 order of PCGG commissioner Raul Daza was the real sequestration order, and not the March 18, 1986 "order" issued by PCGG lawyers Ramirez and Abella. The latter was just an "implementing order," it claimed.

"Absent any clear and concrete evidence, it is unfair and unjust to assume that they (PCGG lawyers Ramirez and Abella) were acting without proper authority and that they have unlawfully or illegally arrogated upon themselves a power or authority which they knew very well, having so clearly expressed in their implementing order, as belonging or vested to the commission," said the PCGG and the OSG's motion for reconsideration.

Although the March 18, 1986 implementing order did not mention the March 13, 1986 freeze order, this should not invalidate the action taken by the two lawyers in seizing the Romualdez property, Solicitor General Simeon Marcelo said in defense of the PCGG.

He said that without any concrete proof that the two lawyers had acted irregularly or arbitrarily, this failure to mention the March 13, 1986 letter from PCGG commissioner Daza "should not at all affect, much less, altogether invalidate their actions."

Gloria forms coco levy board

MALACAÑANG has tasked a five-man board of trustees to manage the coco levy dividends worth hundreds of millions of pesos forthcoming to the government.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has so far named three members: Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor as chair, Philippine Coconut Authority chief Danilo Coronacion and ARMM Gov. Parouk Hussin.

The President reportedly wants a Catholic Church leader who has been involved in the issue to also sit in the board.

She has not yet decided on the fifth trustee.

"The idea here is to create an institution which would manage the fund that could be raised from the coco levy funds," presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said.

Ms Macapagal will issue the executive order creating the board of trustees for the coco levy funds next month, he said.

The government estimates that the coco levy dividends with the United Coconut Planters Bank has reached P700 million.

In February, the government took over UCPB, which administers the 27-percent San Miguel Corp. shares believed to have been bought with coco levy funds.

Tiglao said Hussin was appointed to the board because Malacañang wanted to give "special attention" to Muslim coconut farmers and workers to lift Mindanao out of decades-long poverty.

Tiglao did not name the two other trustees being eyed by the President.

But newly appointed presidential assistant on media and ecclesiastical affairs, Conrado Limcauco, had claimed that the President tasked him to find ways to unlock the coco levy funds.

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Founding Chairman

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OPINION

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Political parties

EDITORIAL

MANILA Mayor Lito Atienza says there was nothing unusual, much less illegal, about the series of dinners, luncheons and meetings he hosted for barangay officials, youth leaders and media people in the first quarter of last year. These activities were part of the "constant consultations and liaison with barangay officials, the youth and the NGOs" he was conducting "to address the pressing, relevant problems and needs of the community," the mayor claims. They were "perfectly legal" since they were "sanctioned" by the Local Government Code. "Government operations do not cease to be operative (*sic*) during the election period lest public interest be jeopardized," he adds.

What Atienza doesn't deny is that he hosted quite a lot of luncheons and dinners for a lot of people between Feb. 19 and March 29, 2001—and Manila's taxpayers paid all the bills. For example, six dinners for a total of 9,000 barangay officials, held from March 23 to 25 and then from March 27 to 29, cost the city government P1,686,877. Dinner for young voters on Feb. 23 and 24 cost P245,600. A luncheon for media people cost P107,927. The total bill for all the entertaining and partying the mayor claims he had to do over a period of 40 days came up to P2, 329,126.

The amount of public funds squandered by the mayor is too small to make him liable for plunder. But it should be enough to put him in jail for a number of years, if the Office of the Ombudsman could be prodded to go after him. Even better than the chances of his conviction for malversation is the possibility that Atienza will be stripped of his position—if only the warring factions in the Commission on Elections could sit together long enough to do some official business.

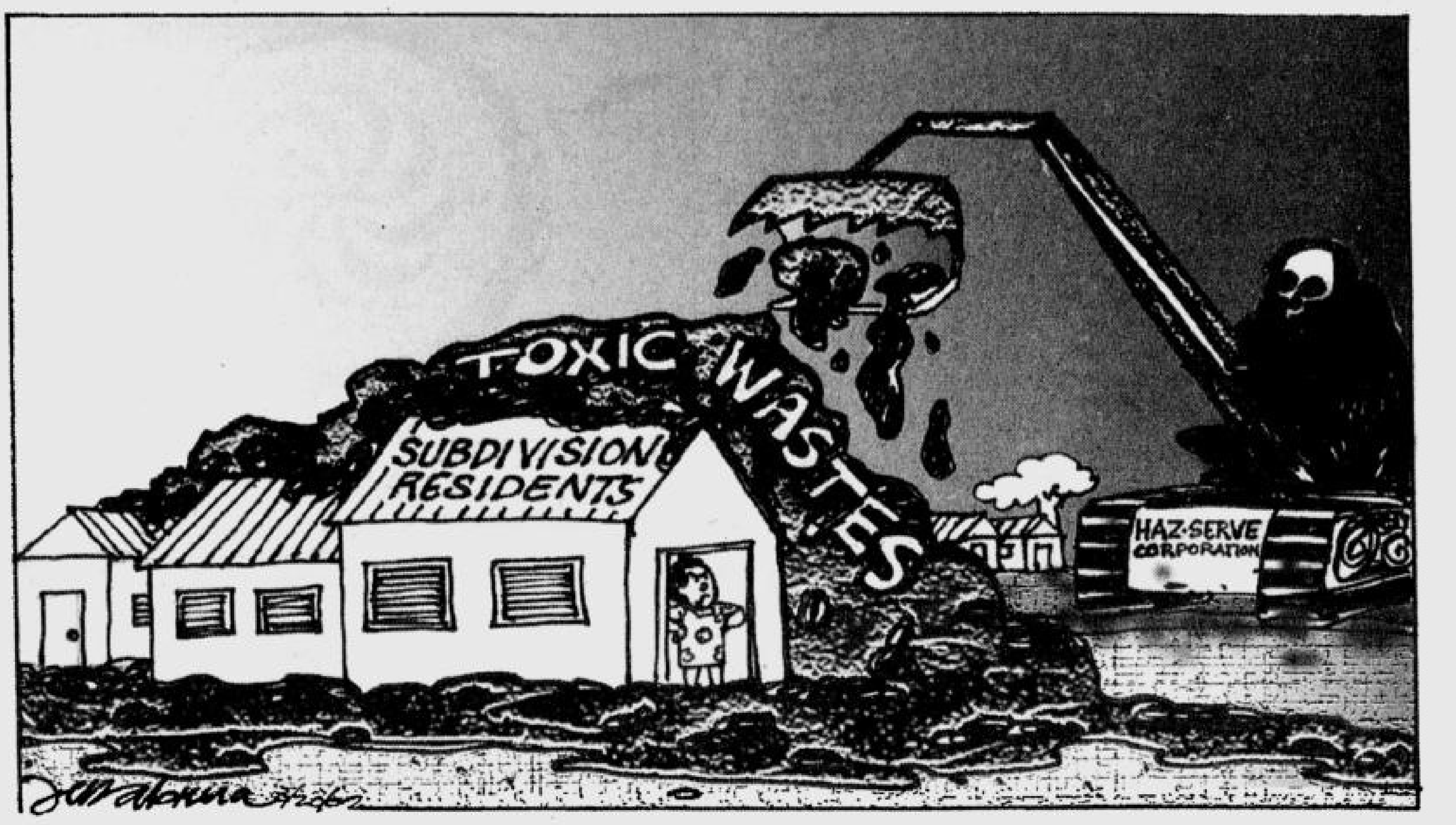
On Jan. 29 this year, the Comelec office in the National Capital Region recommended that Atienza's proclamation as the winner in the May 14, 2001 elections be annulled and that he be "disqualified from continuing to hold office." Directors Ferdinand T. Rafanan and Esmeralda Amora Ladra said the meals and meetings and the distribution of T-shirts constituted "premature campaign activities in violation of Section 80 of the Omnibus Election Code." The Comelec-NCR officials also found Atienza guilty of violating the provisions of the Code prohibiting the giving of "money and other material consideration to influence, induce or corrupt the voters." Aside from being stripped of his office, the election officials said, Atienza should be prosecuted for these violations of the Code.

Now the decision as to whether Atienza goes or stays at City Hall rests solely in the hands of the Comelec. The Supreme Court has ruled that the Comelec has the authority to annul any canvass or proclamation which was made illegally.

The problem, however, is that the Comelec has been paralyzed by the scandalous infighting among the commissioners. Just as bad, the two factions have been known to vote like partisan blocs, with the faction led by Chair Alfredo Benipayo going one way and the four-member majority led by Commissioner Luzviminda Tancangco going the other way. Thus, even if they manage to bestir themselves, there is always the possibility that the decision will be split along partisan lines, with the Tancangco faction consisting of Estrada appointees siding with Atienza, a very loyal ally of the disgraced former president.

This case gives the Comelec a unique singular opportunity to show to candidates and voters alike that election laws are there to be followed, not flouted openly. With the exception of the provision specifying areas where campaign posters can be placed, no other provision of the Election Code have been so frequently and brazenly violated as those prohibiting vote buying and illegal campaigning. No politician of note, if any, has been caught and punished for such violations, since democratic elections were restored after Edsa I. Will the two camps rise above their bitter quarrel and do what the law mandates them to do?

It is a question only they can answer, of course. But if they wish to do the people this favor, they might as well do it quickly to make the decision meaningful. The Comelec and the electoral tribunals of Congress are quite notorious for sitting on cases and making decisions when the term of office is almost over. Unfortunately electoral contests are not like ballgames. A last-minute win may represent a moral victory, but it is for all intents and purposes an empty victory—for the victor, for the electoral system and for the law.



Foreign cement cartel fooling its workers, ex-solon

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

LIKE the fight between the Palestinians and the Israelis over a piece of the Holy Land, which goes back for centuries to the biblical patriarchs, the fight between Vivian Yuchengco and Robert Coyiuto over the leadership of the Philippine Stock Exchange goes back to the patriarchs of the two families. The fathers of Vivian and Robert were rivals in the early insurance industry. Alfonso Yuchengco had Great Pacific Life and Malayan Insurance; their principal rival is the elder Coyiuto's Prudential Insurance.

When the elder Coyiuto died, Robert inherited the business and he became the principal rival of Al Yuchengco. Their animosity deepened during their fight over control of Oriental Petroleum which Coyiuto won. But Yuchengco had the last laugh when Oriental Petroleum did not find enough petroleum and lost money. Their propaganda war resulted in Yuchengco filing a libel suit against Coyiuto and his Manila Chronicle, which is still being tried in court.

The unkindest cut is that a number of very professional and objective editors and reporters of the Chronicle were caught in the middle of the Yuchengco-Coyiuto family feud. They were included in the libel suit although they had nothing to do with the alleged libelous stories at all. They were included simply because their names were in the editorial box. They joined the Chronicle when the feud was already long raging. And they're still included although they no longer work for the Chronicle.

And now the fight has spread to the PSE where the younger Yuchengco and Coyiuto are members.

As in the Middle Ages or in the American hillbilly clan wars, the Yuchengco-Coyiuto family feud has caught many innocent lives in its deadly web. Will it ever end, and end happily? Isn't there a mediator who will try to hold peace talks between the two warring clans? If the President can hold peace talks between the government and the rebel MILF and NPA, why not a similar one between the Yuchengcos and the Coyiutos?

* * *

The foreign cement cartel in the Philippines is using its Filipino employees and, ironically, a former nationalist senator and congressman, to force the government to change its economic policy of deregulation, liberalization and competition. By threatening its Filipino hosts that the foreign-owned cement companies will lay off Filipino workers, it is trying to force the Philippine government to renege on its commitments to the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Last Monday, the cartel unleashed its employees to picket and demonstrate against the Tariff Commission. They want it to re-impose a P20-per bag tariff on imported cement. If it is not protected from foreign competition, the cartel warned, their companies would close shop and throw thousands of Filipino workers out of jobs. The Filipino employees—and ex-Congressman Wigberto Tañada—have taken the bait, hook, line and sinker.

What they don't realize is that they are fighting for an unscrupulous foreign cartel that is squeezing the blood out of their fellow Filipinos. The giant European cement companies entered the Philippines by buying out all except one of the Filipino-owned cement companies. Once they were in control of the Philippine cement industry, they began raising prices. The price of local cement has more than doubled since they took over.

That is what they have done in Brazil and other parts of the world. They buy out the local cement companies, control the market, form a cartel and then raise prices to astronomic heights. They want to be the Opec of cement by controlling the world market, poor country. The price of cement in Brazil, is even higher than here. And yet the cartel sells the same cement at very low prices to America, which is a very rich country.

That is why the price of cement here, in Brazil and in other countries they control are very high. They are dumping their cement in rich countries like America.

And yet they accuse Korea and Taiwan of "dumping" here. They are just getting a dose of their own medicine. And yet they have the temerity to demand that the Philippine government, whose citizens they are victimizing, to protect them by imposing a tariff on imported cement.

* * *

What benefits do we get in return for protecting the foreign cartel? Nothing. The profits are sent to their mother companies in other countries and don't benefit us at all. On the other hand, its expensive cement make government infrastructure projects more expensive. The costs of roads, bridges, schools, hospitals and clinics, office and residential buildings, and private homes have become prohibitive. The poor and even the middle class can hardly afford decent homes anymore. Thousands of workers have lost their jobs because of the slump in construction. But the cement cartel is fattening on the blood of Filipinos.

Look at the injustice of it all: The cartel mines its raw materials here, processes them here, have its factories and offices here, uses Filipino labor, yet sells that cement at very high prices here and then sells the same cement very cheaply in other countries. When cheaper cement imports become available, the cartel wants the government it is victimizing to protect it by limiting imports and raising prices.

In the first place, the cartel can compete with imported cement if it only stops dumping its cement in other countries and then getting back its losses and profits by raising its prices here.

In the second place, the number of Filipino workers who cannot be employed because of the high cost of cement is many times more than the number of workers in the cement industry whom the cartel is scaring with layoffs. Moreover, the construction industry, which is dependent on cement, has a multiplier effect on 11 other industries.

And on labor.

Which should the Tariff Commission and Trade Secretary Mar Roxas help? The ailing construction industry which is the biggest single factor that can help boost the economy, or a foreign cartel that is victimizing its hosts and sending its profits to the mother countries of its members?

A question of identity

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

OSCAR Evangelista had a very interesting letter last Monday (Letters, March 18). Evangelista, who identifies himself as a retired professor of history and former president of the Philippine Historical Association, was appalled to hear on radio that a bill has been filed in Congress calling for March 16 and April 27 to be made holidays. What appalled him wasn't the fact that there were already too many holidays in the Philippines. It was the fact that one of the proposed holidays, March 16, marked Magellan's "discovery of the Philippines."

While it was good that the bill wanted to mark as well Lapu-Lapu's resistance to invasion, which was the April 27 part, Evangelista said, it was bad that it would continue to perpetrate the notion that we were somehow lost before Magellan came and needed to be found to start our history. Philippine historiography has to a great extent already gone past that, many history professors now treating Magellan's coming as just one of many external interventions in this country. Indeed, Evangelista says, many history professors go as far back 250,000 years BC to tell the story of this country. It wasn't a story that began only in 1521. It's time we stopped thinking it did.

It's a very good point, and one we would do well to heed. I am particularly glad that the reminder came from someone named after the very thing Spanish colonization stood for, which was evangelization. It's another one of those small ironies this country is heir to.

There are of course pitfalls to this that we must also avoid. Chief of them is the temptation to romanticize the pre-colonial past that tends to hound propositions like this. There were two particularly strong varieties of this sometime ago.

One was the tendency to belittle or even scorn the Western influences, to see them as having had only a superficial effect on us. This particular viewpoint, which sparked a debate in the 1960s, said that if you scratch the Filipino deeply enough, you will find a pristine non-Western core inside. This was soundly refuted by the Institute for Philippine Culture, which called this the "onion skin theory of Philippine identity." The problem with peeling off the layers of onions—which represented the various "external" influences on the Filipino—is that you end up with nothing. There is no core, the onion is its layers. From another direction, which was the creative one, Nick Joaquin showed how deeply Spanish and American culture lodged in the Filipino psyche. You took them off, and there was no Filipino.

The other, though far less well known, pitfall is exaggerating the wonders of the pre-colonial past. That was the impression one got from reading F. Landa Jocano's anthropological works. Not quite incidentally, Jocano entitled his foremost book on the subject "Philippine Prehistory," suggesting himself that what happened before the Spaniards came was largely a prelude—doubtless a long one, but a prelude nonetheless—to Philippine history. But clearly, our mummifying techniques and engineering feats such as the rice terraces notwithstanding, we had no culture or civilization anywhere resembling China's and Japan's, or nearer home Thailand's and the Indochinese countries'.

These excesses aside, the project of looking at Philippine history as something that stretches well beyond 1521 is eminently valid. Indeed, the project of looking at Philippine history resolutely from our point of view and not from those who colonized us is eminently necessary.

Its merits do not lie only in the difference between *insurrectos* and revolutionaries, which was the difference in the way the Katipuneros were seen by the American occupation force at the turn of the 20th century and the way they saw themselves. Though that is an incalculable merit enough as it is. Its true merits lie in that it allows us to understand ourselves by seeing ourselves from our own eyes, from the perspective of our own dreams and purposes, and not from the judgments and expectations of others. That is the stuff of which identities are made.

In the past, as I've said, the question of identity has been snagged by the problem of romanticism. But there is really no reason to idealize the past to see things from our point of view. We do not have to imagine a glorious past that was somehow devastated by the colonial horde the way Peruvian civilization was. We do not have to believe that Spanish and American colonial rule, which lasted for 400 years, did not alter our consciousness in a thoroughgoing way. We need only to see that we were not the savages that had to be delivered spiritually and physically to the light. We need only to see that the process by which we became "westernized" was not a simple one of pouring things into an empty receptacle but a complex one of mixing many things.

We do this, and a lot of things become intelligible to us. We see why our Christianity is the way it is: It is not merely that a primitive people resisted a foreign influence and so made its effects incomplete. It is that a people who believed in *anitos* assimilated a different belief into their own. We see why our democracy is the way it is: It was not merely that a people who did not know the meaning of liberalism were unprepared for democracy. It was that a people's struggle to be free was aborted midstream, and replaced by the letter rather than spirit of freedom.

But what's the big deal about identity? Well, look at countries like Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia, and look at us. With nations as with individuals, you have no sense of self, you will never know, and do, what you want. You will only know, and follow, what others tell you to.

Racking up GMA's doctors of spin

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has an identity problem about how she is going to be perceived by the public. The manifestation of this problem is that she has surrounded herself with spin doctors who have different ideas of presenting her to the nation and whose functions relative to her are ambiguous.

Presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao will soon be press secretary, ending the bifurcation of the job of explaining the presidency between Tiglao and Noel Cabrera, head of the presidential press office. In the past, the job of press secretary and presidential spokesperson was rolled into one, and previous press secretaries—like J.V. Cruz for President Magsaysay and President Marcos—did a good job of it.

Even though the press office is a bureaucracy, it did not diminish the effectiveness of explaining the presidency for it to be headed by one man who is also the presidential spokesperson. Previous press secretaries were always with the president, thereby giving them an intimacy with the presidential thinking; they could always leave the administration function to their deputies.

Press Secretary Cabrera, who is being given a diplomatic posting, was a superfluity. He hardly attended important Cabinet meetings, and this explains the fact that he failed to provide authoritative information about the Cabinet and presidential decisions.

Although Tiglao has to spend much of his waking hours with the President, he does not always reflect accurately her point of view and he tended to misinterpret her, giving rise to occasions where the President had to correct him, much to his embarrassment. Giving Tiglao as larger responsibility as spokesperson and press secretary could be a job too large for him and, in any case, it does not insure that he will interpret the President accurately.

Not very unlike deposed President Joseph Estrada, President Macapagal has her own brand of cronyism in her public communications apparatus. She has an unofficial "publicist" (a pompous word for PR) in the person of Dante Ang who pulls strings behind the official information framework, and as such, he is not accountable for the publicity gaffes of the President. He has inputs but has no responsibility, and too often, Tiglao takes the blame for Ang's interventions through the backdoor.

Ang is known as an "image maker" of the President, an association dating back to her days as vice president. Ang is reputed to be responsible for giving her the Nora Aunor gloss that is believed to have won her the vote of the *bakya* class, but this gimmick is no longer useful for her as President. The President does not really know what aspect of her personality she has to present the public and, indeed, there is an internal debate inside the Cabinet over whether she would behave just as she is—i.e., a person with a short fuse—or present a soft image, which is what Ang likes her to be perceived. But like all shadow advisers, when Ang surfaces to the public view, he is a PR disaster. He is giving Ms Macapagal a soft image, when in fact, she is a tough person and is very demanding on her Cabinet members in their performance. She knows when they don't do their homework, and she calls their attention to their sloppy preparation.

Tiglao and Ang are uneasy with each other. Tiglao is irritated by Ang's backroom access to the President and does not exactly believe the Nora Aunor image being promoted by Ang does justice to the President. Tiglao is an idea-oriented person, and Ang is a gloss artist who does not know the difference between an idea and an issue and gimmickry. The President is articulate in explaining her decisions in policy and strategic terms, she can do this better than Tiglao or Ang. In fact, she does not need them to explain; when they do, they not only bastardize her ideas but also trivialize them. And neither is good at damage control. Tiglao's main job, aside from explaining the President, is to be a lightning rod. He is very clumsy in doing the job of absorbing the shock, so it bounces back to the President. Ang wants to make the President look cute—but the presidency is not about being cute. It is about leadership, initiatives, programs, policies and being tough to get things done.

Malacañang is reinforcing its communications team with the recruitment of "Dodi" Limcaoco, as its liaison with the church, although his function is ill-defined. During the crisis of Estrada's presidency, Limcaoco, who was acclaimed as a strategist for the Church groups in the Erap-resign movement, was not only abrasive but also drew an elaborate scenario on the outcome of the Estrada impeachment trial. His scenario—backed by a detailed outline that read like a religious superstitious prophecy about the mobilization of protest groups after the assumed acquittal of Estrada by the impeachment tribunal—was widely off the mark. Events overtook the scenario and rendered it absolutely useless.

One wonders how Limcaoco could help the President either in explaining her actions, decisions and policies or in clearing up what she really wants to be perceived by the public. Tiglao, Ang and Limcaoco have different ideas of their respective roles and how to help improve the President's communication to the public. Through this prism of spin we will end up not knowing who really is Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

In search of a worthier enemy

COMMENTARY

Joel Rocamora

THE MORO Islamic Liberation Front is being set up to become the next target for the Americans. A coordinated public relations campaign painting the MILF as "the real terrorist threat" has been going on for a couple of weeks. It began with the American media: The CNN special on Balikatan, the reports of Time magazine's Anthony Spaeth, the New York Time's Nicholas Kristof, the Far Eastern Economic Review have all spouted the same line.

Targeting the MILF makes sense from the twisted logic of George W. Bush's "war against terrorism." Less than a hundred hungry, exhausted, surrounded Abu Sayyaf hardly qualify as worthy targets for the world's only remaining. superpower. The MILF is a more worthy target. It has over 10,000 armed guerrillas. It is not just a bunch of kidnappers with a penchant for cutting off heads. And it has good credentials as an Islamic movement with deep roots among the Moro people.

The next step in the campaign was to get Philippine authorities into the act. They knew they would get cooperation from the author of Estrada's "total war" against the MILF: then AFP Chief of Staff Angelo Reyes is now defense secretary. Local military commanders such as Gen. Roy Kyamco, commander of the Army 6th Infantry Division, also want a wider war. Local politicians led by the Lobregats in Zamboanga, North Cotabato Gov. Emmanuel Pinol and Maguindanao Gov. Andal Ampatuan have all been clamoring for the expansion of the war in Basilan to their areas.

MILF-ASG links

The first task was to link the MILF to the Abu Sayyaf. Various military and police sources claimed that the MILF was "coddling" the Abu Sayyaf in Basilan. Others went so far as to claim that the Abu Sayyaf was just the "fund raising" arm of the MILF. More important was echoing the American propaganda line that the MILF was "the real al-Qaida link" to the Philippines. Government authorities went to great lengths to link the MILF to the Jemaah Islamiyah, a regional Islamic group allegedly behind a plot to blow up embassies in Singapore. Four men arrested in Manila "late last year and accused of being terrorists" have also been linked to the MILF without the slightest shred of evidence.

The next part of the campaign involved accusing the MILF of violating the August 2001 ceasefire. Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Gen. (ret.) Eduardo Ermita has already indicated that talks with the MILF will be suspended. Suddenly kidnappings, attacks on military camps and patrols, burning of road building equipment—all regular occurrences in Central Mindanao—became part of a "MILF military offensive." One "police intelligence" report said MILF leader Hashim Salamat has returned from abroad and ordered a full-scale war.

Unfortunately for the military, not everyone in government has been willing to cooperate. "If Salamat had fled the country, then who was the one I have been talking to in the Liguasan Marsh," Presidential Assistant for Mindanao Jess Dureza asked. Dureza also pointed out that talks cannot be "suspended" because there have been no talks since October last year. The question is whether to reopen talks. Sen. Aquilino Pimentel, a Mindanaoan, has warned against rushing into war again with the MILF.

The MILF has been unwilling to give a war. In Basilan, where the MILF has more men under arms than the Abu Sayyaf, they requested coordination so there would be no accidental firefights. The military arrogantly replied that the MILF should just keep out of the way. In Maguindanao, the MILF called for a formal investigation into accusations they had burned a government bulldozer but General Kyamco said there was no need for an investigation. Ibrahim Murad, MILF military chief says Salamat has not issued a military order in 20 years, he only makes decisions on religious issues.

MILF spokespersons deny links to Abu Sayyaf and al-Qaida. They quickly condemned the Sept. 11 attacks. They have provided carefully argued theological arguments against terrorist attacks against civilians. They have also condemned Abu Sayyaf kidnappings. Far from being a criminal band, they have a social base among the better educated ulama in Maguindanao areas. Their political and economic support comes from identifiable groups in Central Mindanao society. Most importantly, they embody the aspirations of a Muslim population with historic grievances against Manila governments.

Dangers not grasped

The anti-MILF campaign provides a perfect example of the dangers lurking behind Balikatan. The Americans want a more "respectable" enemy than the Abu Sayyaf. Apart from always being on the lookout for war, an occupational hazard of being military, the Philippine military believes that the bigger the war, the more they will get out of the Americans. Local politicians are either racist anti-Muslims like Piñol and the Lobregats, or Muslim politicians like Ampatuan who are fighting for their own political lives against other politicians, in this case Zacarias Candao who is close to the MILF.

Taken together, their separate interests might just be enough to provoke a war. A war that will be tragic not just for the Moros, not just for the Mindanaoans who will bear the brunt of a greatly expanded war, but one that will have killed the prospect for peace—a peace we so richly deserve. In the end,, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo will have to decide: Is she going to give the Americans a war? Or is she going to give us peace?

Joel Rocamora, is the executive director of the Institute for Popular Democracy (IPD)

Golden arches in the old hometown

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

IT does give you a jolt, driving into your old hometown and being greeted by the golden arches of a McDonald's outlet.

You don't know whether to cheer the hometown's entry to the "big leagues," or mourn the passing of an era. Or is it possible that your mental picture of the town of your origins has long been eclipsed by reality?

The Alaminos of my memory is a quiet town which just happened to be the nearest jumping off point to the Hundred Islands. But even in Lucap, the seaside barangay from where the tourist hordes depart for the islands, the bustle is confined to the *pantalan* or pier, and to the resorts. We used to have a house in Lucap, and from our balcony, we espied the buses and vans loaded with excursionists raising clouds of dust as they speeded down the highway. But otherwise, the tourism trade hardly disturbed the quiet mornings.

It was even quieter in town, where, from the vantage point of the huge windows on the second floor of the "big house," the *"bahay na bato"* that my *lolo* built, we could spy on everyone coming and going. This was because the house stands just behind the town plaza, across the church. From these windows, we had a privileged view of basketball tournaments, the processions on Good Friday and other religious occasions, and of anyone crossing the plaza on the way to market. I remember times when, expecting visitors from Manila, we stood sentinel by the windows because we could spot all the vehicles traveling on the main road and those turning right to the road leading to Lucap.

Huge acacia trees, which thankfully still stand, shaded the plaza with its basketball court and kiosk plunked down the center. Late afternoons, just as the church bell tolled the Angelus, everyone walking by would stop to pray, only to move on once the bells tolled again. If we happened to be playing hopscotch on the dusty street just as the bells tolled, we were expected afterwards to rush to our elders gossiping nearby to kiss their hands, as a sign of respect.

Funny, but it's been decades since I last heard the church bells tolling the Angelus. When did my hometown become too noisy for church bells?

***

LAST year, Alaminos became a city, the only one so far in Western Pangasinan.

It may have been quiet only in my memory because Alaminos has always been a busy crossroads, a trading and commercial center even for surrounding towns like Anda, Agno, Bolinao, Bani, Mabini, Burgos, Infanta, Sual, Labrador and Bugallon.

My family has long been part of the city's commercial life. Though they also happened to own agricultural lands and salt beds and fishponds, my maternal grandparents, Gabriel and Emilia Braganza, were also tradesfolk and entrepreneurs. They established and ran the town's first hotel, "Hotel Alaminos," and had an interest in the first movie theater. Years later, on the site of the old Hotel Alaminos, my mother set up "Gabemil," named after her parents, a dry goods and variety store that benefited greatly from its location just across the street from the public market. The property would fall into my uncle's hands, and take on various incarnations as an ice drop factory, a pharmacy, even a computer school. Today, it is the site of the McDonald's outlet, a huge glowing "M" mounted high on its roof, dominating the skyline of Alaminos. What would Lolo Ambing and Lola Eming have to say to that?

***

TO CELEBRATE the first anniversary of cityhood, as well as the feast day of the town patron, St. Joseph, local leaders organized a three-day celebration with the theme "Alaminos: A City Rising in the West, Gearing towards Development."

Mayor Eduardo Fontelera, Vice Mayor Teofilo Humilde Jr. and other city officials hope to focus the celebration toward the future, as the new city rises to the challenges of development in this part of Pangasinan. But as Bishop Jesus Cabrera, prelate of the Diocese of Alaminos, reminded officialdom, cityhood should also mean "more and more people, especially the poor, (enjoying) whatever social benefits may come when a town becomes a city."

Organizers, led by Councilor Ella Braganza, have crammed the three days with a flurry of activities, from sports tournaments to an amateur singing contest, an agri-agra trade fair, parades, a Search for Binibining Alaminos, and even a Search for Miss Gay Hundred Islands. Alaminos is also privileged to pay host this year to the pastoral visit of the Papal Nuncio, the Most Rev. Antonio Franco.

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AS part of the cityhood anniversary, Alaminos honored "12 Outstanding Alaminians" Monday evening.

The awardees were led by Agrarian Reform Secretary Hernani Braganza and Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Q. Montemayor.

Among the other awardees were: former Provincial Fiscal of Pangasinan Rodolfo Aquino; retired general Edgardo Espinosa, now managing director of the Manila Economic and Cultural Office (Meco) in Taiwan; civil society leader Jeremias Montemayor (Leonie Montemayor's father), who founded the Federation of Free Farmers; and internationally recognized fisheries expert Herminio Rabanal.

Former Mayor Leon Rivera, who served as town mayor for 16 years, was also honored, along with Regional Trial Court Judge Leo Rapatalo; Police Director Victor Signey, now the director for research and development of the PNP; Special Prosecutor (with the Office of the Ombudsman) Leonardo Tamayo; the country's first chess International Master Rodolfo Tan Cardoso; and this columnist, the only "daughter" among the sons so honored.

Lenten taboos

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

WHEN I first read T.M. Kalaw's "The Philippine Revolution" I was struck by the part that has Andres Bonifacio, Emilio Jacinto, Aurelio Tolentino and other Katipuneros going around the mountains of San Mateo and Montalban. According to Kalaw the Katipuneros entered the caves of Makarok and Pamitinan and here the "first cry" of the Philippine Revolution was made. The rather dramatic text reads:

> "...and penetrating farther into the depths of the cave, in the midst of a shadowy silence, isolated from the world and protected by the solitude from the Spanish authorities they wrote on the walls with a piece of charcoal the following words *Long Live Philippine Independence!* These words, written by a trembling hand, betrayed the ideal of the Katipunan and the principal objective of these conspirators. they constituted, in truth, the first cry of the rebellion against Spain."

Later historians have fixed a date on that event—April 12, 1895 in Pamitinan Cave. Reconstructing this event in my mind I remember that it was a Good Friday and presume that the Katipuneros followed *Pinoy* Lenten traditions—no baths, no laughing, no loud chatter, and charging of their *anting-anting*. They were in the wilderness, far from the Guardia Civil, but their enthusiasm was restrained by the fact that it was *viernes santo*. How could they proclaim independence with the required fervor and volume? They should have shouted themselves hoarse while tearing their *cedulas*. On the contrary, they went deep into a cave where, by the flickering light of torches and candles, Bonifacio, with a piece of charcoal, etched on the walls "Long Live Philippine Independence!" (or words to that effect). The irreverent have argued that a defiant cry for independence should be made in public with risk to life and limb. Instead we have graffiti on a cave wall. Not very inspiring indeed. Perhaps this explains why most historians emphasize the events of August 1896 (date still unsettled) as a reference point for the beginning of the Philippine Revolution.

Bonifacio's graffiti in Pamitinan came to mind as I laughed my way through the two-volume "Encyclopedia of Philippine Folk Beliefs and Customs" by Francisco Demetrio, SJ. In my vain attempt to be timely and relevant for Lent I consulted these books and got tied up with Holy Week taboos. I noticed that most of the material was gathered from the Visayas and Mindanao in 1967 which made for some interesting reading. For example, people were warned against traveling during Lent or walking about at noon on Good Friday. The worst that would happen would be a bite from a snake or some other animal. In Manila the worst that can happen is that I meet a cellphone snatcher or get run over by a public utility jeep, bus or taxi. The taboos do not concern urban dwellers or Gen X, but these gave us an insight into a world long gone.

At 40 I am old enough to remember being warned against bathing on Good Friday. When I asked why, the old folks would simply reply *"patay ang tubig"* assuming that everyone else knew or agreed that water could die once a year on Good Friday. I'd like to think the Philippines and the Filipinos have changed a lot since Father Demetrio did his field work. I'd like to believe we have changed much since the time of the Philippine Revolution so what is the use of these old taboos? While Father Demetrio's material is dated at least it is a record about how people thought in a given period.

It was an experience to see Escolta or Makati deserted during Holy Week, but in recent years that has changed as more people are discovering the joys of avoiding the rush to the country. Why go to Baguio if only to bump into all the people you try to avoid in Manila? With malls open on Black Saturday the injunction against spending during Holy Week is obsolete. Before cable TV viewing fare during Holy Week was limited to: a satellite feed of the papal mass in Rome with voice-over by Father Reuter, Cecile B. de Mille's "Ten Commandments," the black and white Spanish film Marcelino pan y vino, the sword and sandal film "Ben Hur" and dramatized versions of the mysteries of the rosary produced by Patrick Peyton. The last was particularly stressful because the faithful who watched these were only shown the back of the Lord's head. Imagine listening to the words of God spoken from a wig with curly black hair. Today we have freedom of choice.

Some taboos are beyond our experience like wearing red on Good Friday was bad. Red symbolized happiness and life when the general mood should be black and sorrowful. Red is also inappropriate at wakes and funerals for the same reason, but then isn't red, the color of blood, a symbol of life and revolution? Then there were warnings against roasting meat or fish on Good Friday. If you did so you risked getting freckles or your face getting black. Playing or walking about on Good Friday was bad. Violators were threatened with snake bites or being killed by Romans and Jews just like Christ. I may not encounter snakes, Jews, or Romans in Glorietta or Rockwell, but the Abu Sayyaf can spoil any resort holiday. Holy Week taboos stress how much we have changed over time. Whether that is good or bad is the subject for another column.

* * *

Comments are welcome at ambeth@admu.edu.ph

THEY SAID

Can't mix

"But this is all wrong because like oil and water, justice and politics can't mix. The very nature of politics is compromise. We can't compromise criminal cases."

—Lawyer Leonard de Vera on the twin resolutions in Congress granting deposed President Joseph Estrada surgery in the United States

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Justice system is being tested

THE PHILIPPINE justice system is being put to a test by no less than the man whose responsibility in his time as chief executive called on all Filipinos to respect the nation's judicial institutions.

Now he issues inflammatory and divisive statements against the system, turning the table against the government and polarizing the nation into a rich-versus-poor conflict.

"Political masterstroke," gleefully reacted the politicians who swallowed the former president's statements hook, line and sinker by exploiting the possibility of an armed revolution or civil strife that would engulf the country.

Dismissing the defense lawyers is a stupid way of delaying the trial. Whether they advised that they be dismissed or not, the defense lawyers were in cahoots in corrupting the justice system. They simply raised their hands and surrendered their client to the mercy of the court—a unique way of defending a client, a rabid abuse of due process. These lawyers are a disgrace to the lawyering profession. Either they should be disbarred or charged for contempt.

Joseph Estrada's trial should go on if only to strengthen the faith of our people in our justice system. Let us not worry about the politically imagined revolution or civil strife, concoctions which only our politicians can contrive and take advantage of. But whether the situation is imagined/contrived/plotted, let us have faith in the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police. They are the protectors of the people and the State.

Let's get the trial going and fast. Let all forms of media come in a behaved way. Allow transparency so that people will be spared imagining what's happening inside our courts. Our people are entitled to know how the Philippine justice system is being carried out. There should be no fear in dispensing justice in an open and transparent way. The lady of justice is blindfolded to remind the judicial magistrates not to be hindered/influenced by external factors brought about by allowing a wider and nationwide viewing of the former President Estrada's trial.

The Sandiganbayan should not allow Estrada's tantrums to derail our justice system. Through Estrada's trial, the Sandiganbayan should underscore the equality of all before the law irrespective of political persuasion, ethnic origin and social standing.

—**FORTUNATO U. ABAT,**
major general (ret.)

SSS answers some tough questions

WE are grateful that Josephus Jimenez dedicated his entire column (PDI, 2/1/02) to Social Security System-related issues. We hope you would give us the opportunity to clarify some of the issues he raised in the article.

1. While the employers whom you compel to contribute are helplessly saving costs via retrenchments and layoffs, isn't the SSS too overmanned and too heavy at the top? Don't you have five EVP's, six SVP's, 20 VP's and 30 AVP's?

The statement is inaccurate. The SSS has only one executive vice president, five senior vice presidents and 16 vice presidents.

SSS is a big organization. It has about 5,000 employees and its number of officers is justified considering that it operates 172 branches worldwide. The present structure is based on a study made by renowned international auditing firm, Andersen Inc., in the late 1990's. It was part of the decentralization program initiated by former administrator, Renato Valencia.

2. Because of this bloated SSS bureaucracy, do we pay for the multiple duplication of services that are hardly delivered? For one, whose job is it to deal with us, the AVP for media affairs under the CEO or the SVP for public affairs under corporate services? Then where are they?

The answer is very obvious. Only the Media Affairs Department is authorized to deal with the media. Under Social Security Commission No. 436, the MAD "shall be the primary interface of the SSS with the press. It shall be responsible for the preparation of and publication of news releases, official statements and reports in the mass media." There is no duplication in services as alleged.

3. Private insurers can provide bigger, better and more member-friendly services. The SSS is not competitive. If not for legal compulsion, the majority of the members could have opted for better services.

The SSS is a social insurance institution and does not operate like a private insurance. The contributions of members are pooled. It adheres to the concept in which the rich subsidize the poor, the healthy subsidize the sick and the young subsidize the old.

The SSS provides a minimum floor of income protection against various risks covered such as old age, invalidity, maternity and survivorship. Although SSS pension is more than the amount of the member's total monthly contributions, they are designed to replace only part of the income lost when contingency happens.

Private insurance firms charge much higher premiums compared to the SSS. The policyholder determines the amount of benefits he would receive in the future. The insurance firm computes the amount of premiums needed to support the benefits.

4. How many workers' claims have been denied by the SSS? They were compelled to put in their money intended for death, disability or sickness. And yet, when members die or are disabled or sick, your commission invokes too many technicalities to deny widows and orphans their due benefits?

We request Mr. Jimenez to cite specific instances when the SSS denied members their benefits.

The SSS charter has set guidelines and regulations on granting benefits. These regulations ensure that only qualified members are granted benefits. It protects the fund from possible fraud and abuse. SSS funds would be depleted if it grants benefits liberally without adhering to the rule set by law.

—**JOEL P. PALACIOS,**
assistant vice president, Media Affairs Department, Social Security System, East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City

Terminated for illegal strike not because of Edsa II

IN THE INTEREST of truth in journalism, we think it is just that Yokohama Tire Philippines Inc. (YTPI) presents the facts relative to the Jan. 20 and 22, 2002 articles in the Philippine Daily Inquirer, entitled "Did Edsa change your life?" and "Edsa II Veterans. They paid with their jobs." Blanche S. Rivera wrote both articles.

Contrary to their claims, Jerry Javier, president of YEU, and his companions were legally terminated due to their numerous illegal acts that began even before Jan. 17, 2001, or Edsa II. It is a mockery of the true Edsa spirit that they now try to trivialize their illegal acts in the guise of anti-Erap actions. Their assertions cannot be farther from the truth. Clearly they now seek to exploit Edsa to escape the consequences of their illegal acts.

Javier et al. were dismissed for just cause and after due process of law when they used illegal (and sometimes violent) tactics in the course of a strike. Such tactics included the harassment of fellow workers (including the pregnant ones) who refused to join them and the blockading of YTPI's gates to prevent the non-striking workers (numbering about 400) and the vehicles from entering or leaving. These illegal tactics resulted in losses which amounted to millions of pesos.

On Dec. 26, 2000, the Regional Director of the Department of Labor and Employment cancelled the registration of the union of Javier et al. (YEU) after the Dole regional director determined that the union had used fraud and misrepresentation during its organization.

In contravention of labor laws, Javier et al. began boycotting their jobs to force YTPI to recognize YEU despite the Dole's cancellation of its registration even before Jan. 17, 2001. Javier even wrote the YTPI management threatening that he and the YEU members would not go back to their jobs until it was recognized by YTPI.

The boycott and abandonment of their jobs continued even after Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was sworn in as President on Jan. 20. In fact, their abandonment of their jobs continued and was transformed into a full-blown strike beginning Jan. 22, 2001 when they (numbering around 100) set up barricades near and in front of YTPI's gates to step up their efforts to force YTPI to recognize YEU as the bargaining agent of the rank-and-file employees.

A videotape of their alleged "vigil at the shrine" will show that Javier and company were not even near Edsa. The videotape shows that Javier et al. were simply loitering near the main gate of the Clark Special Economic Zone. There were no placards raised or chants shouted to force then President Joseph Estrada to step down from his post. Their supposed "vigil" consisted of merely clowning around, exchanging high fives and smoking cigarettes. No one would even have an inkling that they were an anti-Estrada or a pro-Edsa contingent. One would tend to believe they were just a *barkada* having a good time.

YTPI neither prohibited nor punished its employees for joining the Edsa II activities or other efforts in support of the Edsa II forces.

YTPI, a domestic corporation principally engaged in the production and exportation of tires and other related accessories, should not be punished for the illegal and irresponsible acts of Javier et al. It provides livelihood to about 500 employees, with its rank-and-file employees earning an average daily salary of about P250, way above the current minimum wage for Region 3. YTPI is ISO-certified and is one of the top investors in Region 3.

To reiterate, Javier and his cohorts were never dismissed for their alleged participation in the Edsa II events. They were dismissed for their illegal activities they committed in an attempt to force YTPI to recognize YEU. The records will bear this out.

Let us not forget that the Edsa II spirit includes equity, discipline and respect for the law. The truth must prevail.

—**KEIICHI SEKIYA, president, Yokohama Tire Phils. Inc., IE5 CSEZ, Clark Field, Angeles, Pampanga**

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INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING PROGRAM

PRESIDENTIAL COMMITTEE ON EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

RULES AND REGULATIONS IMPLEMENTING EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 72
(RATIONALIZING THE AGENCIES UNDER OR ATTACHED TO THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT)

Pursuant to Section 5 (Oversight) of Executive Order 72 dated February 11, 2002, the following rules and regulations are hereby promulgated and adopted, upon consultation with the Civil Service Commission and the Commission on Audit, and approval by the Presidential Committee on Effective Governance:

RULE I
POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

Section 1. Title. These rules shall be known and cited as the Rules and Regulations Implementing EO 72, which calls for the rationalization of agencies under or attached to the Office of the President (OP).

Sec. 2. Declaration of Policy. It is the policy of the Administration to undertake a streamlining program to rationalize the organization and supervision of the agencies under or attached to OP.

Sec. 3. Statement of Goals and Objectives. The objectives of the rationalization of the agencies under or attached to OP are as follows:

a. To focus the attention of the Office of the President on the overall management of governmental affairs and the supervision of agencies requiring direct Presidential intervention;

b. To enhance accountability for specific activities by transferring supervision of related agencies to those whose functions are properly aligned with/or subsumed under existing departments; and

c. To simplify and expedite processes and procedures in the Office of the President and in the entire bureaucracy.

RULE II
COVERAGE

Sec. 4. Coverage. All agencies, task forces and other bodies chaired by the President, placed under and/or attached to the Office of the President, including those which are intended to attend to the locally funded projects of OP which are abolished, deactivated, merged, or consolidated as a result of the implementation of the OP streamlining plan, shall be covered by the guidelines prescribed herein on the winding-up of their activities.

RULE III
DEFINITION OF TERMS ON ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIONS

Sec. 5. Organizational Actions. As used in the EO and in this implementing rules and regulations, abolition, deactivation, merger, or consolidation of agencies shall mean as follows:

- ***Abolition*** pertains to the dissolution of an agency. It is a one-time elimination or discontinuance of an agency's operations.
- ***Deactivation*** pertains to making an agency dormant or inoperational by phasing out its functions or transferring them to other departments/agencies. An agency is rendered dormant or inoperational if its operation is terminated but its formal existence continues. It is devoid of any activity, personnel, financial and physical resources.
- ***Merger*** pertains to the absorption of an agency by another; the acquired/absorbed agency is dissolved, while the identity of the acquiring/absorbing agency is maintained.
- ***Consolidation*** pertains to the dissolution of agencies to form a new agency.

RULE IV
WINDING-UP PLAN

Sec. 6. Preparation of a Winding-up Plan. The winding-up plan shall be prepared within one (1) month from the issuance of the Executive Order that directed the abolition, deactivation, merger or consolidation of an agency, unless an earlier winding-up period is stipulated. In case of abolition/deactivation of an agency, the winding-up plan shall be prepared by the head of the agency. In case of agency abolition/deactivation but whose functions have been transferred to another, the plan shall be prepared by the head of the absorbing agency, in consultation with the head of the abolished/deactivated agency. In case of merger, the winding-up plan shall be prepared by the head of the acquiring agency, in consultation with the head of the absorbed agency, while in case of consolidation, the heads of the affected agencies shall jointly prepare the plan.

Such plan shall be submitted to the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) for approval. The implementation of the plan shall be completed within three (3) months from its approval, unless otherwise indicated in the EO or authorized by the Presidential Committee on Effective Governance (PCEG).

In the preparation of the winding-up plan, the head of the agency concerned shall undertake the following activities:

a. Obtain a complete documentation on the following areas:
   - Existing organization structure, staffing pattern and plantilla of personnel, indicating filled and unfilled positions;
   - Inventory of physical assets to include lands, buildings, equipment, supplies;
   - Status of financial resources, including existing contracts, receivables, loans and other obligations; and
   - Status of pending cases filed by or against the agency.

b. Prepare the Winding-Up Plan containing the following:
   - Dispositive action for functions and/or organizational units indicating which ones will be abolished/phased out, transferred, devolved or merged, based on the provisions of the EO;
   - Dispositive action for positions, specifying which ones will be abolished, retained, transferred, converted or reclassified, in accordance with the dispositive action for the corresponding functions and/or organizational units;
   - Dispositive action for personnel, indicating who will be transferred, separated, retired or placed in the manpower pool;
   - Dispositive action for the physical assets, specifying which ones will be transferred to other agencies, with or without cost, sold by public bidding or donated, as applicable;
   - Dispositive action for pending cases; and
   - Budgetary reconfiguration as a result of the changes brought about by the organizational changes.

c. Obtain DBM approval of the Winding-Up Plan.

d. Implement the Winding-Up Plan as approved.

RULE V
SPECIFIC DISPOSITIVE ACTIONS AND PERSONNEL, BUDGETING, ACCOUNTING AND AUDITING REQUIREMENTS

Sec. 7. Dispositive Action for Functions. The dispositive action for functions shall be consistent with the specific provisions of the EO on the abolition/deactivation/merger/consolidation of the agency/ies concerned. Such actions may involve the following:

a. If the functions of the absorbing entity are the same/similar to the functions, activities and projects of the merged/abolished/deactivated agency in terms of objectives, geographical or clientele coverage, expected outputs and outcomes, the internal structure of the absorbing entity shall be retained. Any organizational change that may be introduced to such agency, if not provided by the EO, shall be strictly aimed at streamlining and making the agency's operations effective, but not expanding or making it bigger than its present structure.

b. The internal structure of the agency which is mandated to absorb the functions, programs, projects and activities of the merged/abolished/deactivated agency may be strengthened or expanded, as may be provided by the EO, or if there are additional mandated functions which are not currently being undertaken, subject to the evaluation by the Department of Budget and Management as to the need for such organizational change. The functions of the affected agency shall be prioritized on the basis of their linkage to the organizational, sectoral, or societal outcomes. Strengthening may be effected for those which contribute substantially to sectoral/societal outcomes. Functions, activities and projects that are devolved to local government units shall be excluded.

c. Consolidated agencies shall form a new agency, taking into consideration the functions of the new body in the design of its organization structure and staffing pattern, subject to the final approval by the Department of Budget and Management.

Sec. 8. Dispositive Action for Itemized Positions. The dispositive action for itemized positions involving either abolition, transfer, conversion or reclassification shall correspond to the requirements of the specific provisions of the EO on the abolition/deactivation/merger/consolidation of the agency/ies concerned. Such actions may involve the following:

a. Outright abolition of vacant positions;

b. Abolition of positions declared redundant due to the abolition/deactivation/merger/consolidation of agencies/organizational units;

c. Transfer of positions to other agencies/organizational units due to the transfer of certain functions to pertinent agencies/units; and

d. Conversion/reclassification of positions, provided that the number after conversion/reclassification shall not exceed the original number, and that the personal services (PS) requirements shall not exceed the PS cost of the abolished/reclassified positions.

Sec. 9. Personnel Actions. The following guidelines on personnel actions shall be adopted:

a. Upon receipt of the EO, the following personnel policies shall be observed in the agencies concerned:
   - non-filling of vacant regular/permanent/itemized positions; and
   - non-renewal of contracts/appointments of all employees hired on contractual, casual or temporary basis.

b. Affected personnel shall be given due notice of the action to be taken regarding his employment.

c. All personnel hired on hired on contractual, casual or temporary basis shall be terminated thirty (30) days after receipt of the notice indicated under Section 9.b hereof.

d. Incumbents of regular/itemized positions whose items have been abolished shall be placed in a pool to be administered by the Civil Service Commission (CSC), with the end in view of matching their qualifications with the needs of the other agencies of the Executive Branch. They shall stay in the pool for a period of three (3) months during which time, efforts shall be undertaken to deploy them. After three months, they shall be deemed separated or retired, as the case may be.

e. If a match has been found and the incumbent objects to it, he shall likewise be deemed separated/retired. Those who are deemed separated or retired shall be paid separation or retirement benefits, whichever is applicable, under existing laws.

f. The hiring of personnel pursuant to Section 9.d hereof shall be exempt from existing prohibitions on new hiring that may be contained in any Presidential issuance at the time.

Sec. 10. Disposition of Assets and Liabilities. The following guidelines shall be adopted in the disposition of assets and liabilities.

a. All assets and properties of abolished/deactivated/merged/consolidated agency/ies shall be duly acknowledged by the Office of the President.

b. Assets and properties that may be necessary in the performance of the transferred functions shall be identified and transferred to the absorbing agency.

c. Assets and properties which shall not be transferred to the absorbing agency shall be made available to other government agencies.

d. Other assets that may still be remaining shall be disposed of by the Office of the President.

e. All liabilities and pending cases shall be transferred to the absorbing agency. In case there is no absorbing agency, the Office of the President shall assume the same.

Sec. 11. Budgeting, Accounting and Auditing Requirements. The following guidelines shall be followed:

a. Funds for the payment of three (3) months salaries and other benefits of personnel placed in the pool shall be transferred/released to the CSC;

b. Funds for existing vacant positions in other agencies to be filled by transferred personnel shall be sourced from the corresponding funds transferred/released to the CSC, to be augmented by the DBM, if necessary.

c. Funds for the payment of separation and retirement benefits to be paid by the national government shall be taken from the remaining funds of the abolished/deactivated/merged/consolidated agency/ies, if any. Otherwise, DBM shall give priority to the payment of the aforecited benefits from the Miscellaneous Personnel Benefits Fund.

   Those qualified to retire shall receive the retirement benefits to which they may be entitled to under existing laws, rules and regulations. Otherwise, they shall be paid separation benefits pursuant to RA 6656 (An Act to Protect the Security of Tenure of Civil Service Officers and Employees in the Implementation of Government Reorganization).

d. The existing accounting, auditing and budgeting rules and regulations on the winding-up of agency operations shall be strictly adhered to.

RULE VI
GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

Sec. 12. Reporting Requirements. The PCEG shall submit a report to the OP on the implementation of agency winding-up activities.

Sec. 13. Effectivity. This Implementing Rules and Regulations on EO 72 shall take effect upon its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation, whichever comes earlier.

This 15th day of March, 2002 in the City of Manila, Philippines.

EMILIA T. BONCODIN
Co-Chairman, PCEG
and Secretary of Budget and Management

AN OPEN LETTER TO HER EXCELLENCY, GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO

Madame President, we the **stakeholders of Boracay**, have long been suffering from the poor service of the sole rural electric cooperative in our province the **Aklan Electric Cooperative (AKELCO).**

As our "*Ina ng Bayan*," who has sworn to protect the interest of her people, we feel that you deserve to be informed of the inability of AKELCO to provide adequate service to Boracay and the resulting distress and frustrations this has brought us and tourists visiting the island.

We have been religiously paying our monthly electric bills even as AKELCO **consistently fails** to keep its part of the bargain, and yet on Monday afternoon, Boracay and the rest of Aklan, was in total darkness because Napocor cut of the power supply.

Madame President, consider the following:

- Aklan experiences **daily power interruptions and extreme voltage fluctuations** translating into losses of millions of pesos worth of appliances, equipment and worker productivity.
- AKELCO has an average annual system loss of 21%, exceeding the allowed 14% national system loss cap by 7%; in other words, **AKELCO consumers are being penalized for AKELCO's inefficiency;**
- AKELCO is the only rural electric cooperative on Panay Island that is **class D the second lowest category given to poorly performing electric cooperatives.** This, even as **it serves the country's premier tourist destination**; and
- AKELCO has an outstanding payable of P140 million to the National Electrification Administration (NEA) and another P105 million accounts payable to the National Power Corporation (NPC).

Madame President, as an economist, you understand the negative effects of AKELCO's poor performance on the national tourism industry and the economy as a whole.

Despite the downturn in Philippine tourism, **the Island Paradise of Boracay, which has been consistently chosen as one of the best beaches in the world by international magazines, registered a 15% increase in tourism arrivals last year, which translated into P2.02 billion worth of tourism receipts**. Boracay remains the glitter of hope for the country's tourism but this might not be the case if things are left unchanged.

Boracay, daily, experiences 150 - 180 volts of electricity instead of the standard 220 volts. This results in higher electric consumption. It is also accurate to say that because of AKELCO's unreliable service, Boracay, in effect, receives power only for 15 days a month.

To compensate for the remaining 15 days, we, Boracay residents and establishment owners, resort to running our own generators which produce noise and air pollution.

These frequent brownouts are also starting to result in visitor checkouts from resorts here. Visitors are complaining about the discomfort and inconvenience they're experiencing as well as risks to their security because of these power fluctuations and outages.

This situation is sure to worsen as we go deeper into summer, which is the peak season in the island.

For Boracay to realize its potential as a world-class tourism destination comparable or even better than what our neighbors in the region can offer, we need adequate, efficient and consistent power service something that is obviously beyond what AKELCO can provide the island.

Madame President, you are our only hope in resolving the situation before the start of the season on December 2002. We humbly but urgently request your immediate intervention and action in effecting:

- **The immediate termination of AKELCO's general manager, and immediate reorganization of its functions and operation under the NEA or any appropriate body; and**
- **Fast-tracking of the installation of the 69 KV lines from Nabas to Caticlan in Malay, Aklan and the**
- **Replacement of the underwater cable through which power is transmitted from Caticlan to Boracay Island as well as the so-called "spaghetti" wires so poorly installed by AKELCO in the island; and**
- **The opening of Boracay's power market to accommodate other power suppliers to compete freely with AKELCO's replacement**
  The installation of proper power supply for the world's best beach by start of the season on December 2002

Should we fail to act *now*, **Boracay Island, which is the crown jewel of Philippine tourism** may lose its luster in no time at all.

With every good wishes and assurances of our continued support!

Mabuhay kayo, Madame President!

LOWEL TALAMISAN
President
Parish Pastoral Council

KAREN REINA
Chairman of the Board
Boracay Foundation Inc.

CICERON CAWALING
Mayor
Municipality of Malay

EDGARDO BELTRAN
President
Cat-Bora Transport
Multi Purpose Coop

DIONISIO J. SALME
President
Boracay Foundation Inc.

GLEN SACAPANO
Punong Barangay
Balabag

Mlabatiao
MIKE LABATIAO
President
Boracay Assn of
Scubadiving Schools

LOURDES YAP
President
Preserve Boracay Movement

JOEL GELITO
Punong Barangay
Manok-manok

NOEL SACAPANO
Chairman
Couples for Christ

FILMENITO CLAUD
President
Boracay Regatta Club

ANSELMO CASIDSID
Punong Baragay
Yapak

JOEWANNA SACAPANO
Chairman
Single for Christ

FERNANDO GADORES
President
Boracay Fishermen's Assn

JANGGO
Pakaradian Craft, Music
Indigenous Culture Assn.

JUDITH ICOTANIM
OIC- Dept. of Tourism
Boracay

Historillo
NENITA HISTORILLO
OIC-Consumers
for Proper Power

Acuesta
ADELFA CUESTA
President
Boracay-Malay Vendors
& Peddlers Assn

RUFO SACAPANO
VP-Phil. Coast Guard
Auxilary- Boracay

LOUBELLE CANN
President
Kiwanis Club of Boracay

BARRY LANIER
President
Foreign Residents and
Investors Assn.

DANTE PAGSUGUIRON
President
United Boracay Pro-Poor Assn.
Boracay Trisikad Owners &
Drivers Assn.

ALLEN CAWALING
Chairperson-Malay Green
Ladies Foundation

BAKUNAWA
President
Island Hopping Assn.

RUTH JARANTILLA
President- Don Ciriaco Tirol
Memorial Hospital
Foundation

SABELITO GELITO
President
Motorbike Service Dev't
Cooperative

VICTOR SUPETRAN
President-Boracay Tricycle
Operators & Drivers Assn.

ANDRE ABRIAM
President
Boracay Bar Owners Assn.

DANILO MAMING
President-Rescue 911

MUAMAR ANUMPAK
President-Boracay Muslim
Association

NENETTE GRAF
Director-Boracay
International Funboard
Cup Inc. Assn.

Scuba World
Paulo Collection
Aquarius Diving
Red Diving
Lapu Lapu Dining
Aqualife Divers
Fish Eye Divers
Victory Divers
Red Coconut
Sunshines Place
Stables Real Coffee
Rubicano's
CARIBO Restaurant
NECIA Shop
Steakhouse
Serina's Place
Pizza Snack Bar
Boracay SandCastle
Cocomangas
LA CAPANNINA
G/A
C & N Store
Music Garden
Funky Lightning
Stables Real Coffee
Hey Jude
Rosies Beauty Shop
Bom Bom Bar
Ralph's Liquor Store
Party People
Willys
Bazzura
NETCOM
Manaña
Metropolitan Doctors Medical Clinic
K.O. Creation
Dos Mestizos
Beachcomber
Bysshe's Collection
Bysshe's Drugstore
Titu Bot's Cuisine
Gasnef Cafe & Deli
The Grill Bar
Crystal Sand
GP's Cottages
Caffe 1580
Bamboo Resort
Waling-Waling Beach Hotel
K.O. Lechon Manok
Allied Bank
Agla
English Bakery
Boracay Mini Mart
Boracay Safari Diners- South
Asian Spirit
Club-10
Basura King
Pahan Indian Cuisine
Titay South Beach Resort
Ralph's Place
Hill View Marketing
SGP Face
John Michael Antique
Treebin D' Mall
Bleuvert Ltd.
Melange Boutique
Bamboo Restaurant & Resort
LUD'S
Sauda Souvenir Shop
Cafe Breish
Koda D' Mall
Capt. Haddock
White Beach Divers
La Luna Court
K&C Sov. Shop
Dejavu
Winsurfer
Resident
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UN hits Israel's 'all-out' war

By Evelyn Leopold

UNITED NATIONS—UN Secretary General Kofi Annan told Prime Minister Ariel Sharon that Israel's recent offensive resembled "all-out conventional warfare," resulting in illegitimate attacks on civilians, ambulances and schools, according to a letter obtained on Monday.

The blunt letter, unusual for Annan, was sent to Sharon on March 12 during a week of increasing world criticism of Israel's use of heavy weaponry against Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza that Israel occupied after the 1967 war.

"Judging from the means and methods employed by the Israel defense force—F-16 fighter bombers, helicopter and naval gunships, missiles and bombs of heavy tonnage—the fighting has come to resemble all-out conventional warfare," he said.

"Israel is fully entitled to defend itself against terror," Annan wrote. "But this right does not discharge it of its obligation to respect the fundamental principles and rules of international law."

Specifically, Annan pointed to the killing and injuring of civilians and the firing at hospitals and schools, in one case shooting to death a UN guard who was escorting a wounded man to a hospital. All these actions violated the principle of protecting civilians.

Annan requested Sharon initiate a "full investigation" into Israeli soldiers firing at ambulances and medical personnel "and that you take immediate steps to ensure that they are not repeated in the future."

He called "unfounded and unsubstantiated" statements by Israeli government officials that ambulances may have been used to smuggle Palestinian militants and weapons.

"These allegations can only result in further danger to medical workers and further impede their vital mission," Annan said in the letter.

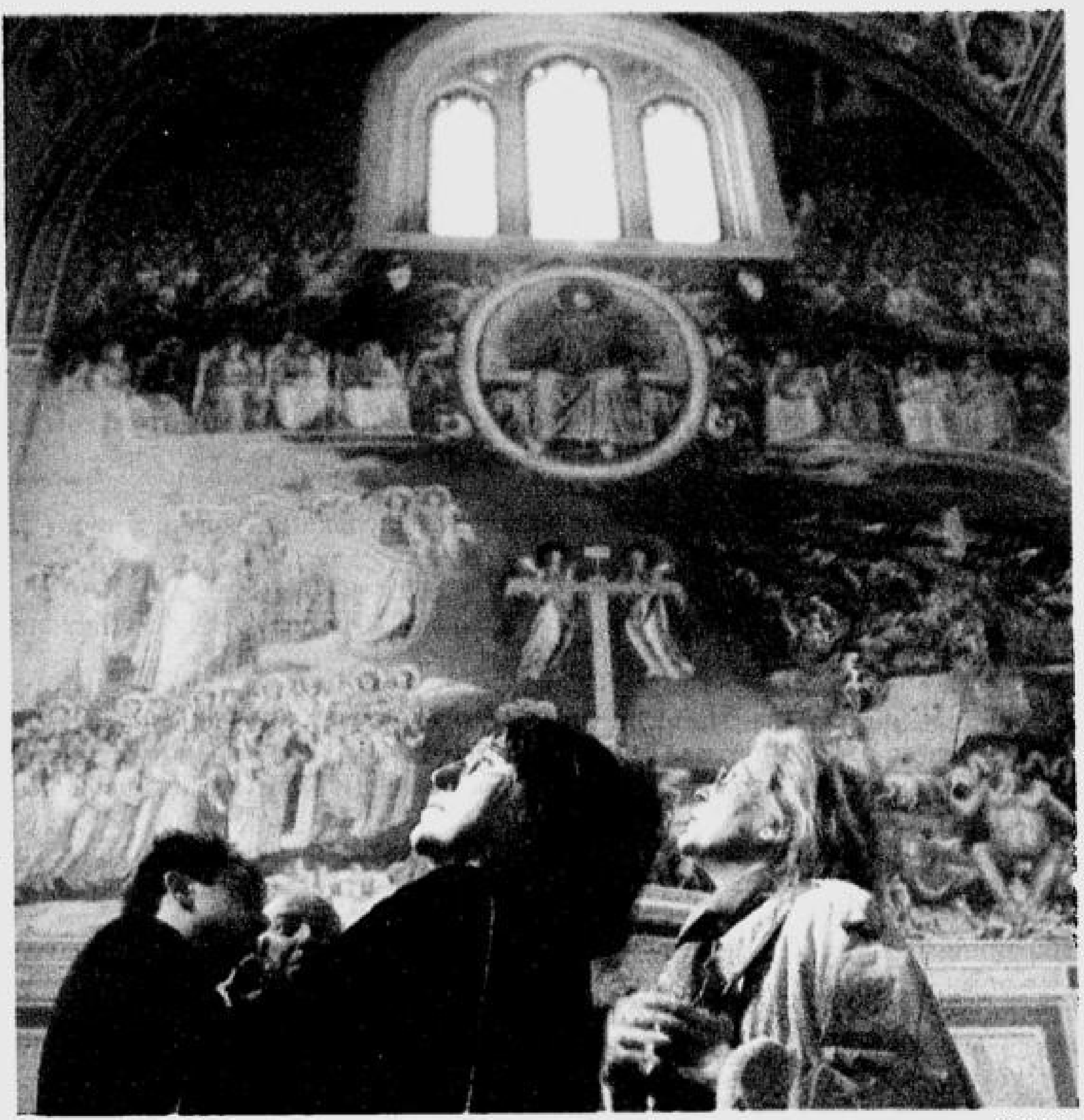
Israeli diplomats said Sharon's office had not responded to the letter. One envoy, speaking on condition of anonymity, said it was regrettable that the letter was leaked to the media. This would not enhance a dialogue between Israel and the United Nations, he said.

The letter was written last Tuesday, the same day Annan delivered some of his harshest criticism of Israel to the UN Security Council, using the words "illegal occupation," a phrase questioned by both the US and British ambassadors.

Asked later about his "illegal occupation" comment, Annan pointed to UN resolutions that defined actions under occupation as violations. But some UN experts admitted that no resolution had called the occupation itself illegal.

That night, the UN Security Council passed a US-sponsored resolution calling for an immediate ceasefire and for the first time endorsing a Palestinian state.

The same day Israeli forces killed 31 Palestinians as part of their biggest offensive in the West Bank and Gaza since 1967. At least 1,074 Palestinians and 375 Israelis have died since the violence broke out in September 2000. ***Reuters***



REUTERS

RESTORED FRESCOES

Visitors admire frescoes by Italian famous painter Giotto at the Scrovegni Chapel in Padua March 18. The 100 biblical scenes covering the entire walls and ceiling of the small chapel between 1303 to 1305 were unveiled after eight months of restoration. Brilliant blue skies, shimmering gold aureolas and the dark trace of maternal tears were revealed after layers of murky grime were painstakingly removed from one of the world's most famous fresco series painted 700 years ago.

US forces kill 16 al-Qaida fighters

WASHINGTON—US special forces killed 16 suspected al-Qaida fighters and captured two others in a raid on a convoy in eastern Afghanistan Sunday even as Operation Anaconda came to an end, US military officials said Monday.

US forces also raided a compound west of Kandahar at about the same time, detaining 31 people and seizing weapons and ammunition, said Air Force Brig. Gen. John Rosa, deputy director of current operations of the Joint Staff.

News of the raids came as the Pentagon declared the end of Operation Anaconda after 17 days. The US-led offensive cleared the Shahi Kot valley of Taliban and al-Qaida fighters, but left eight US soldiers dead and nearly 50 wounded, the highest US casualty toll of the war.

"Operation Anaconda is complete, but Operation Enduring Freedom and operations in Afghanistan still continue," said Rosa. "We still have teams operating in the area, looking for any remaining Taliban and al-Qaida, searching caves and in other positions they may have occupied."

US special forces in helicopters on Sunday intercepted three vehicles traveling south on the roads leading away from the Operation Anaconda area, sparking a fire fight that left 16 men dead, said Rosa. ***AFP***

Amsterdam museum shows 4 centuries of sex for sale

AMSTERDAM—Marie La Motte was no common call girl.

She counted art patrons among her clients and posed for Old Master artists 350 years ago. But that didn't stop her from being hauled in by the Amsterdam police for prostitution.

Her story, detailed in a new exhibition on the history of prostitution in the Dutch capital, shows how society's attitude toward the oldest profession has evolved over hundreds of years.

The double standard is clear when several years later La Motte has become a madam and instead of shutting down her brothel, the authorities of 1660 enshrine it on their list of "Chamber Nymphs."

"Sex For Sale—Four Centuries of Prostitution" at the Amsterdam Historical Museum, also details how the city has come full circle after waves of suppression and easing up.

The multi-media exhibition starts in the 16th century when Catholics turned a blind eye, moves through several attempts at prohibition by straight-laced Protestants and concludes with today's no-holds-barred red light district.

The exhibition—with videos, court documents, mock-ups of brothel rooms and fine art—opened last week at the museum (www.ahm.nl) and runs until Sept. 1.

It includes an Old Master-style oil painting from 1650 showing La Motte as a penitent Mary Magdalene, her draped blouse delicately exposing one pale shoulder and breast. It was commissioned by one of her clients, the patron of artist Dirk Bleker.

The lurid fascination of tourists who gawk at Amsterdam's ladies of the night has persisted through the centuries.

In 1793, a visitor from England expressed astonishment about the city's "musicos," rowdy cabarets where prostitutes mingled with customers.

"If you want to retire with a woman to her lodgings, there is no law to forbid or punish you . . . yet again, Amsterdam's reputation is confirmed!," the visitor wrote in a letter.

Curator Annemarie de Wildt said her research turned up repeated parallels between past and present. ***Reuters***

Briton takes 'right-to-die' case to Europe human rights court

LONDON—A terminally ill British woman who wants to commit suicide with her husband's help takes her case to the European Court of Human Rights on Tuesday.

Diane Pretty, 43, who is paralyzed from the neck down and physically unable to kill herself, wants her husband Brian to be immune from prosecution if he helps her die.

The mother-of-two, who has motor neuron disease, took her "right-to-die" case to Europe after losing an appeal to the House of Lords, Britain's top appeals court, in November.

"She has been looking forward to taking the case on to the next stage," a spokesperson for human rights group Liberty, which is backing the Prettys, said Friday.

Liberty said Tuesday's hearing in the French city of Strasbourg is due to last under three hours, but a ruling is not expected for weeks.

Barrister Philip Havers told the House of Lords last November Diane Pretty faced death from respiratory failure and pneumonia.

Motor neuron disease is an incurable neurological disorder which affects about seven people in every 100,000.

Lawyers for the couple will argue in Strasbourg the British courts' refusal to free Brian Pretty from fear of legal action if he helps his wife die when she chooses infringes on their rights under five articles of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Helping in a suicide is illegal under English law and carries a maximum 14-year jail term. ***Reuters***

Singapore maid abuser draws 5 years

SINGAPORE—A Singaporean woman who bit her Indonesian maid's breast until her nipple fell off was jailed for five years in what is believed to be the stiffest sentence handed down for maid abuse in the city state, newspapers reported on Tuesday.

Jennicia Chow was found guilty of all 10 charges of abusing her maid over an eight-month period, the Today newspaper said.

Kusmirah Mujadi, 19, was also burnt by a hot metal rack, stabbed by a pair of scissors on her thighs and hit across her head with the back of a knife.

District Judge Wong Keen Oon rejected the argument that Chow, a 30-year-old hospital customer relations officer who suffered from severe depression, was unaware of her actions because her "violent disposition" was targeted only at the maid and not at colleagues or her family.

"The accused's act of mutilating the maid's breast was the most extreme form of humiliation," Wong was quoted as saying.

Court officials were not immediately available for comment. The victim is now under the care of the Indonesian Embassy.

Some 140,000 foreign women work in Singapore as domestic help with the majority from the Philippines and Indonesia.

Cases of maid abuse run into the hundreds each year. ***Reuters***

CHOW

Half brother says Osama still alive

WASHINGTON—Osama bin Laden's half brother told CNN on Monday that the world's most sought-after terrorist suspect is not only alive, but does not suffer from a kidney disease that would require dialysis.

Sheikh Ahmad also said his brother Osama was not behind the Sept. 11 suicide attacks on the United States.

"He is my brother. I know him. I lived with him for years. I know how much he fears God," Sheikh Ahmad, who did not want his family name used, said in an interview with CNN.

Sheikh Ahmad and Bin Laden have the same mother but different fathers. He said their mother learned through a telephone call three weeks ago that Osama was well, without revealing the source of the call.

The Bin Laden family owns a large construction company in Saudi Arabia and have criticized Osama for condemning the Saudi royal family for siding with the United States against Iraq in the Gulf War.

Sheikh Ahmad, 36, owns an advertising production company that is part of the Bin Laden empire.

He told CNN that he visited Bin Laden a few times in Sudan, and last year in Afghanistan. He said he was "very worried" about his brother after the United States declared him a wanted man, but that his concerns have since eased. ***AFP***

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WHO urges lawsuits vs tobacco giants

GENEVA—The World Health Organization on Monday urged global legal action against the tobacco industry as part of tougher new international moves to cut deaths from smoking.

The call to examine international litigation against the industry, a new tactic, came as 191 nations resumed talks due to end March 23 on penning a global treaty against smoking.

The draft treaty, which WHO would like to see completed by next year, could affect advertising, farming subsidies, education, bans on smoking in public places and a crackdown on tobacco smuggling.

Anti-tobacco campaigners and WHO officials said negotiations on the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control were gaining momentum, with a large majority of the 191 countries involved backing a strong treaty.

But as this fourth round of talks resumed, WHO officials and campaigners warned that the United States, Germany and Japan were opposing or toning down measures to curb advertising, marketing and trade in tobacco products.

"If we have a treaty that they want to sign up to, it's probably not worth happening," said Clive Bates, of the British anti-smoking group ASH and the International Union against Cancer.

The EU's chief negotiator in the talks, Matti Rajala, signaled that Germany was coming under strong pressure from the 14 other Union members to allow a "full and comprehensive" advertising ban.

Advertising

"Advertising is one area where we do not have full consensus and it is not a secret that Germany has its own opinion," Rajala, an EU Commission official, told journalists.

Rajala admitted that the European Union had been seen as a weak and hesitant partner in the talks but indicated that would change over the coming week.

"We are 100 percent for a strong framework convention," he said.

However he said there were still milder disagreements on measures to deal with passive smoking and stopping the tax-free trade in cigarettes.

Rajala added that the EU position was also hampered by a wider debate about overall agricultural subsidies, and that the EU would be unable to rally around WHO calls to eliminate support for tobacco farming in this round of negotiations.

Developing countries in Africa and South East Asia were also praised by WHO officials and anti-tobacco campaigners for adopting strong positions for the draft treaty. **AFP**

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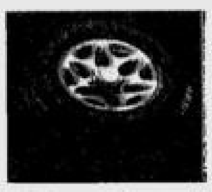

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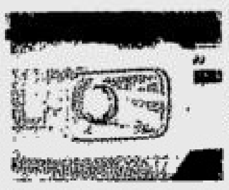

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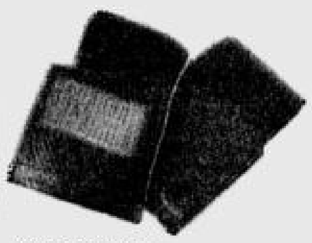

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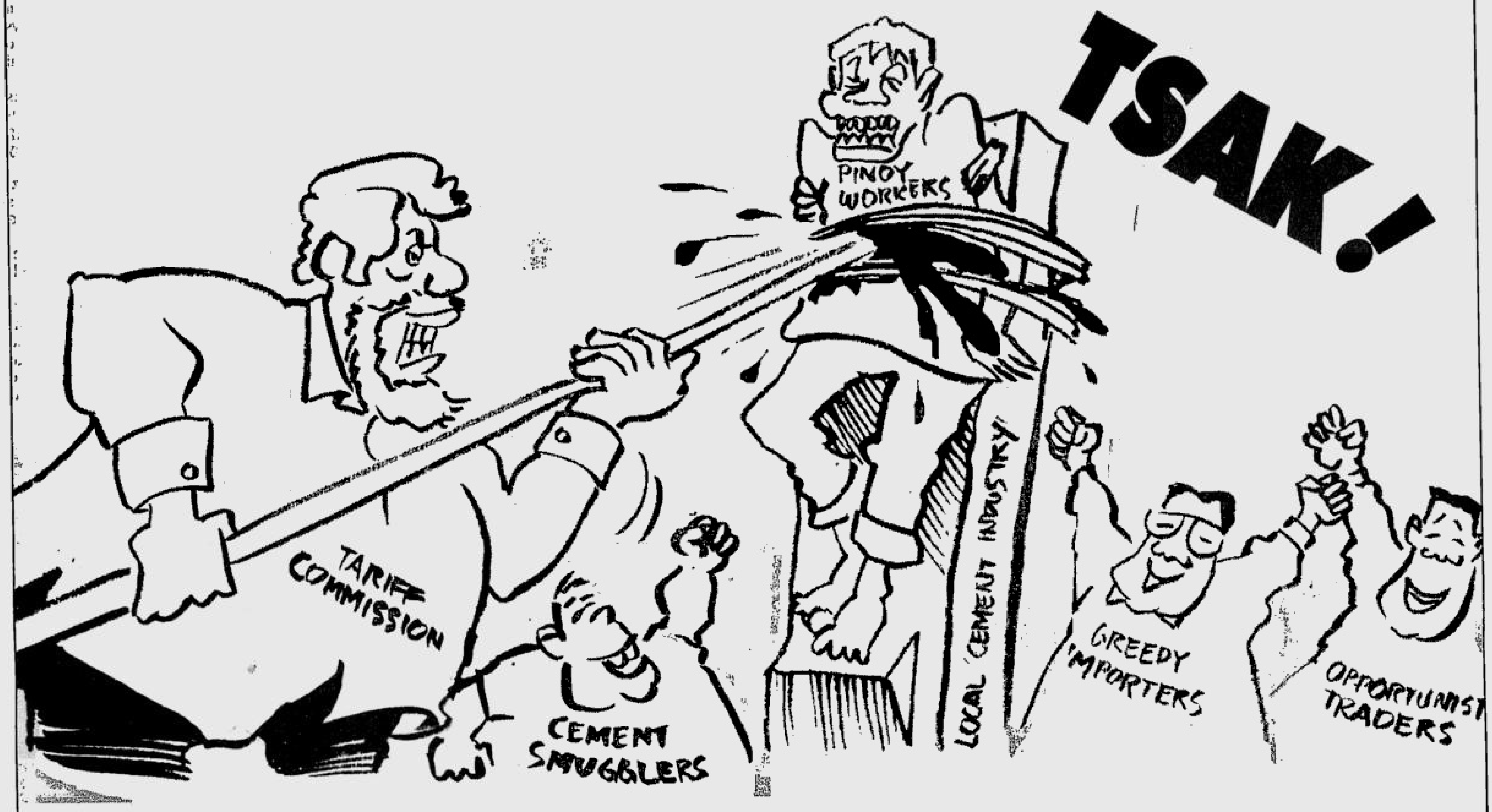
The Season of Betrayal

It has come early for the cement industry, its workers and the national economy. No thanks to the Tariff Commission.



The annual observance of the season of betrayal has come a tad too early for the thousands of workers in the cement industry following the decision of the Tariff Commission to scrap the protective tariff slapped on imported cement.

Like Judas Iscariot, the Tariff Commission turned its back on the government's move to protect Philippine cement from unfair competition created by overnight billionaire importers and their foreign principals-primarily companies in Taiwan, Korea, Hong Kong, Japan, Indonesia and other nations that have been dumping their cement in Asia.

Like Judas, the Tariff Commission lamely argues that the local cement industry does not deserve protection since it has been making money, and that the 20 percent market share of cheap, dumped cement is needed to give consumers a choice. What a choice.

Already, four cement plants have closed down causing unemployment and misery to thousands of employees and their families.

It has been clearly established that a Mafia of cement importers have been lording over the market by undercutting prices, even smuggling their cement, and offering long-term deals to gnaw away at the advantage enjoyed by Philippine corporations that have invested billions of dollars in the industry and expressed their faith in the country and its labor force.

It is that faith in the country that has been dashed to smithereens by the Tariff Commission. The Commission, by acting to protect the market share of compradors and cement smugglers, has become an instrument for the eventual shutdown of Philippine cement manufacturers who cannot compete with traders who have invested nothing in their enterprise. Unlike the manufacturers, these traders have no large work forces to sustain, they have no resources invested in factories and they are not even compelled to pay the right duties and taxes for their dumping operations.

There is no sense of justice in the Tariff Commission, which has favored a gang of influential traders some of whom employ not even 100 people in their firms. In contrast, 30,000 workers depend on protective tariff to make a living and sustain the operations of cement manufacturers. Scores of companies will sink in red ink, all because the Tariff Commission has become the implementor of the conspiracy to destroy the local cement industry by big-time cement importers and smugglers.

In the entire history of this nation, this is the first time that the Tariff Commission has ruled to allow opportunist importers, greedy traders and smugglers of foreign cement to ruin an entire industry. Its ruling runs afoul of the changing attitude in government about the wisdom of globalization and the continuing punitive actions of various nations against Philippine products. Must we allow Judas Iscariot to ruin us some more?

Save our jobs. Save our lives. Save the Cement Industry

Alliance of Stakeholders of the Philippine Cement Industry

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Across the NATION

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Visayas and Mindanao including Palawan will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms becoming widespread rains over Eastern Visayas and Eastern Mindanao. source: **pagasa**

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Hi34° Lo 22°
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Hi 27° Lo 15°
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Hi 33° Lo 22°
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Hi 36° Lo 20°
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Hi 34° Lo 22°
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Hi 33° Lo 20°
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Hi 30° Lo 24°
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Hi 33° Lo 23°
Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 23°
Roxas	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 30° Lo 25°
Cebu	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 25°
Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 31° Lo 24°
Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 34° Lo 25°
Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 34° Lo 25°
Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 31° Lo 23°
Davao	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 25°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research/03/20/02

Drought hits Ilocandia

SAN FERNANDO CITY—An early drought has destroyed rice crops in 7,903 hectares of irrigated rice land in the Ilocos region.

The plants were either just beginning to grow leaves or bear grains.

The Department of Agriculture said production losses have reached more than P1 million or an equivalent of 7,000 metric tons of rice.

Flor Gagni, DA crops division chief, said Pangasinan bore the brunt of the drought, with more than 4,000 hectares of land in 32 towns affected.

La Union had more than 3,000 hectares of rice farms affected, and Ilocos Norte had 203 hectares of land affected.

There was no report of damage in Ilocos Sur, where only three towns with communal irrigation systems were affected.

To stem the effects of the drought, the agriculture department has started distributing shallow tube wells in La Union, Ilocos Norte and Ilocos Sur.

Gagni said 146 wells would be distributed under the department's rice and corn production program.

She said the wells, consisting of an engine and pumps and costing P45,000-P47,000 each, could irrigate between 2.5 hectares and 4 hectares of farm land, and would be given out as loan to farmer-irrigators' associations.

"It is interest-free and payable in five years," she said.

The regional office of the National Irrigation Administration based in Urdaneta City is also undertaking emergency measures to cushion the effects of the drought.

Leodencio Baraquio, NIA regional manager, said they have asked NIA officials to undertake cloud-seeding operations in the drought-affected areas.

Baraquio said his agency had also asked the National Power Corp. to release water from the Binga Dam in Benguet to augment irrigation water in drought-hit farming areas in La Union and Pangasinan. ***Peter La. Julian, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

Antique folk bid goodbye to first bishop

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

SAN JOSE, Antique—Thousands of Antiqueños are expected to attend the burial today of the province's first bishop, Henricus Cornelius de Wit, MHM.

De Wit, 79, died of cardiac arrest on March 8 at the St. Paul's Hospital in Iloilo City. He had been suffering from complications of an enlarged heart.

His remains were brought to the Central House of the Mission Hill Missionaries in Molo District in Iloilo City on March 10. Two days later, the body was transferred to the chapel of the Mensa Domini Sisters here.

On March 17, the remains were brought to the San Jose Cathedral where visitors coming from all walks of life came to pay their last respects.

Antique Bishop Raul Martinez, together with bishops and priests from other dioceses, will lead today's Mass.

De Wit will be buried in a special place of honor behind the altar of the San Jose Cathedral.

Local officials led by Gov. Salvacion Zaldivar-Perez, government employees, students of the diocese-run St. Anthony's College and members of parishes where the bishop was formerly assigned are expected to attend.

Hot cakes, buns, pizza downed pupils, says milk company

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Not milk but hot cakes, buns and pizza sold by teachers could have downed some 200 elementary pupils in Minalin town on March 11, initial investigation conducted by Alaska Milk Corp. showed.

But Santiago Polido, AMC corporate affairs director, said it was up to the Department of Education, the recipient of Senate President Franklin Drilon's "Project School Milk," to pursue the veracity of this information.

Polido, in a press conference held here on Tuesday, said this new angle was worth pursuing.

Both Polido and Pearly de Guzman, chief of the AMC central laboratory division, insisted that the chocolate-flavored milk that the company had been supplying the DepEd in the last six years was of "good quality."

Polido said the AMC investigating team learned that out of three schools where the milk was served, complaints of food poisoning were monitored only in Sto. Domingo and Lourdes.

He said pupils in those schools ate hot cakes, buns and pizza before or after they were served their milk packs.

In contrast, Polido said no complaints for food poisoning were received in the San Isidro school where Alaska milk was also served.

While Polido claimed that only four students were treated for symptoms of food poisoning, provincial officials, citing hospital records, said there were 176 pupils.

Elita Flor Umali, DepEd superintendent in Pampanga, on Tuesday told the INQUIRER that she was sending her representative to the two schools to find out whether AMC's latest report was true.

Umali could not immediately confirm if Sto. Domingo and Lourdes teachers sell snacks to students to augment their income from teaching.

"We would have to get vital information on that," Umali said of AMC's claim.

Polido did not describe the quality of the snacks sold to the students.

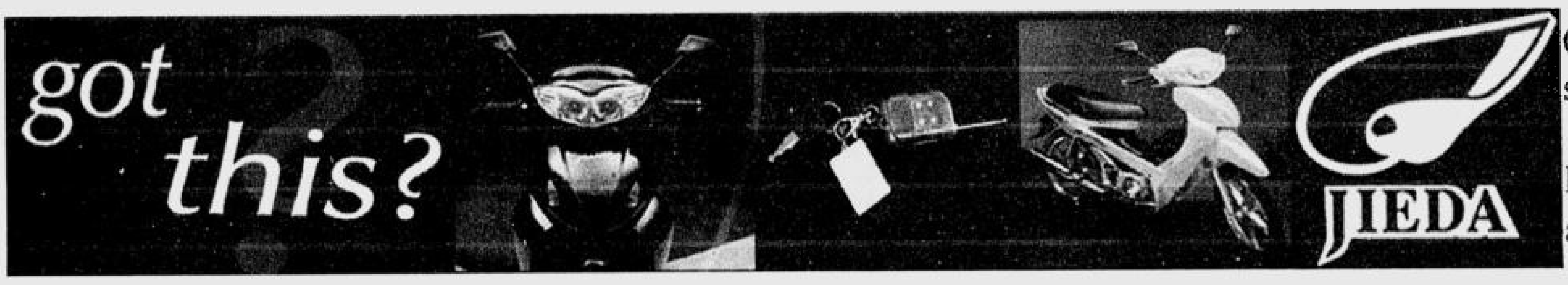
On the milk it supplies to the DepEd's feeding program, Polido said the firm has not taken any chances even as the project comprises only P10 million of its yearly gross sales of P4 billion.

"We were always aware and concerned about the children's health," he said.

Alaska produces milk products under "very rigid process and stringent international standards," De Guzman said. "We did not resort to shortcuts," she added.

Polido said milk samples from the batch delivered to Minalin were sent to a laboratory in Singapore for quality test. According to him, this was done to help dispel suspicions that it was the cause of food poisoning.

He said the milk supply in Minalin was still within the "consumption period," leaving out the suspicion that those consumed on March 11 were expired products.



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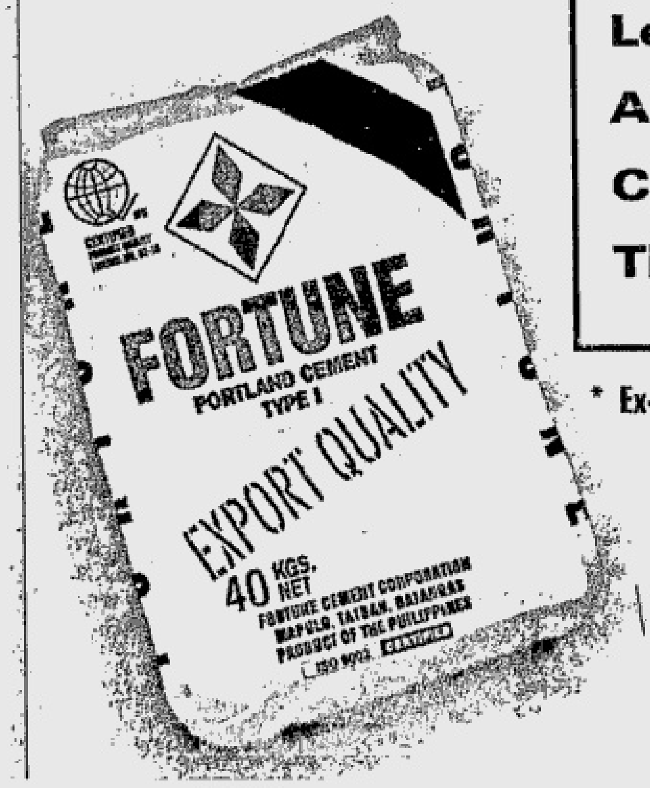
Lipa City	Batangas	122.00	135.00
Sto. Tomas, Batangas	Batangas	122.00	135.00
Tanauan, Batangas	Batangas	122.00	135.00
Lemery, Batangas	Batangas	122.00	135.00
Alaminos, Laguna	Batangas	122.00	135.00
Calamba Laguna	Batangas	122.00	135.00
Tiaong, Quezon	Batangas	122.00	135.00



* Ex-works prices have been effective since November 9, 2001.

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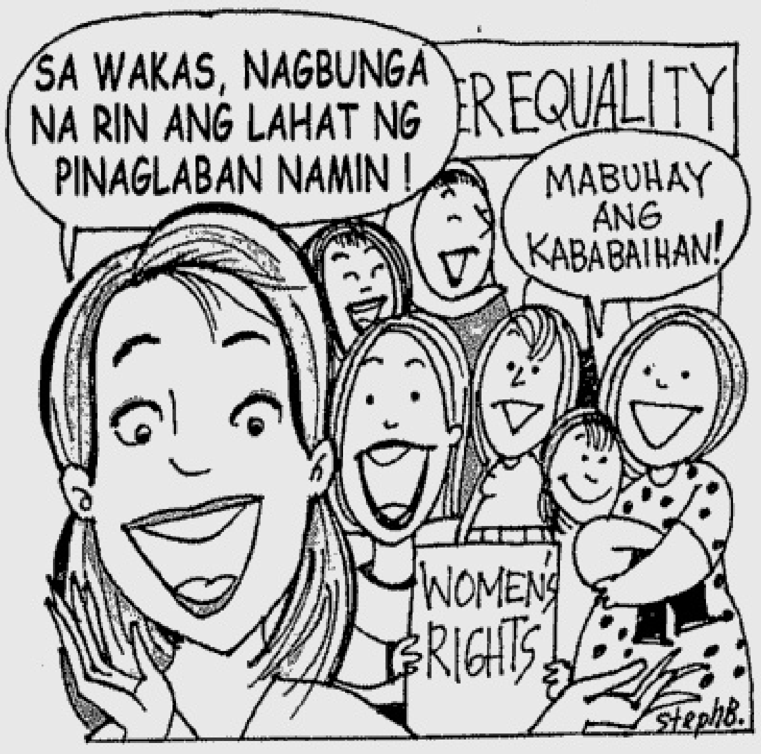
National Price Coordinating Council
Department of Trade & Industry

Editor Jun Bandayrel ◎ Bureau Chief Rolando B. Fernandez

Historic milestones on the women's front

By Maurice Malanes
Baguio City

WITH clenched fists, they used to rave and rant about their clamor in the streets, and nobody, including the government, seemed to listen.



But some seasoned women activists concede that their "street parliamentary struggle" has now borne fruit in the form of official policies and laws that promote gender equality and women's rights and address issues such as sexual harassment.

One historic milestone on the women's front is a newly issued implementing rules and regulations (IRR) of the Anti-Sexual Harassment Act of 1995 prepared by the Board of Regents of the University of the Philippines System, the first learning institution in the country to ever do so.

Another is a joint circular by the Department of Budget and Management, National Economic and Development Authority, and the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women.

The circular mandates all government agencies, local government units, state colleges and universities, and government-controlled corporations to integrate gender and development (GAD) in their programs and set aside 5 percent of their total budget for GAD-related activities.

Taking off from the new IRR, the UP College Baguio (UPCB) since Feb. 13 has launched a campaign to rid the campus of sexual harassment and all forms of sexual abuse.

The drive actually began last December at the UP Diliman campus and is expected to intensify on all UP campuses nationwide this Women's Month.

The drive seeks to drum up awareness among faculty members, administration personnel and students about a new set of IRR of Republic Act No. 7877, also known as the Anti-Sexual Harassment Act of 1995, says Maan Caampued, convenor of the UPCB's GAD center Kasarian.

The new IRR and the law from which these are based are fruits of women activism, she says.

Caampued says the IRR finally saw the light because of lobby efforts of the UP Center on Women's Services, women guidance counselors and male human rights lawyers-cum-women's advocates within the campus.

Compared to an earlier policy on sexual harassment in the workplace, the new IRR, according to UPCB officials, mean a big stride in addressing sexual harassment.

The IRR, for example, clearly define what sexual harassment is and aren't simply lumped with "abuse of authority" or simple misconduct as a previous policy did, notes Dr. Nela Florendo, UPCB associate dean for academic affairs.

As set forth in the IRR, sexual harassment can be committed by "an officer, faculty member, employee, coach, trainor, or any person (with) authority, influence or moral ascendancy over another in any aspect of academic or administrative work in any campus, unit, office or classroom of the university."

Sexual harassment happens when these people demand, request or require any sexual favor from the other, even if she or he refuses.

In the academic or administrative workplace, sexual harassment happens when sexual favor becomes a condition in hiring or re-hiring a person or in granting favorable compensation, promotion or any other terms, conditions or privileges.

Sexual harassment also happens when a faculty member or employee, for example, refuses a sexual favor and this leads to limiting, segregating or classifying him or her, thus discriminating or depriving him or her, and diminishing his or her job opportunities elsewhere.

Sexual favor

In the teaching or study environment, sexual harassment is committed when the offender seeks a sexual favor as a condition in giving a passing grade, granting honors and scholarships, or paying a stipend, allowance or other benefits, privileges or considerations.

Sexual harassment is also committed when sexual advances lead to an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment for the student, trainee or apprentice.

In this study environment, the victims of sexual harassment include students, trainees or those under the care, custody and supervision of the offender.

The new IRR go a step further. These cover not only cases involving abuse of authority or power but also those in peer relationships (faculty-faculty, employee-employee, student-student), those involving harassment of faculty members by students and persons of the same or opposite sex.

Penalty, redress

The IRR also lay out mechanisms for penalty and redress, including counseling and managing grievances.

Under the IRR, each UP campus must set up an anti-sexual harassment office, which sees to it that the university policy, rules, regulations and procedures on sexual harassment are disseminated and become "part of the academic culture."

Headed by the academic affairs associate dean, the office is mandated to create "informal procedures" that elicit trust and confidence from interested parties in resolving sexual harassment cases.

At the UPCB, the ASHO and the Kasarian plan to establish what Caampued calls a "halfway house" off campus to accommodate and entertain complainants.

Why does it have to be outside the campus? This, says Caampued, is to secure the privacy and security of complainants.

Both bodies also intend to establish a telephone hotline, through which complainants can seek the advice of psychologists, she says.

Vital flip-side

A vital flip-side of the Anti-Sexual Harassment Act is Executive Order No. 273, which approved and adopted the 1995-2025 Philippine Plan for Gender-Responsive Development.

From the order, the DBM, Neda and the NCRFW came out with a joint circular in August last year, mandating agencies, local governments, state colleges and universities, and government-controlled corporations, including foreign-funded programs and projects, to use at least 5 percent of their total budget for GAD.

"It is time we become aware of how to put this (5 percent of total budget) to good use by coming up with concrete programs that really benefit women," says newly appointed NCRFW Commissioner Victoria Tauli-Corpuz.

Critics have assailed some government agencies and local government units for allegedly misusing the GAD budget on less socially relevant activities such as ballroom dancing.

But Tauli-Corpuz says women leaders, under what are called GAD Focal Points, may have to acquaint themselves with the fine points of program planning and budgeting and come out with "clear programs of work and clear parameters of success" on GAD.

GAD programs, she says, must address women's concerns such as reproductive health, day care centers for working mothers, among others.

That GAD was finally institutionalized with a corresponding budget did not come easy. This, says Tauli-Corpuz, is actually a fruit of "our long struggle (as women activists)" since the 1970s. The GAD budget, therefore, she says, must not go to waste.

NEWLY installed Baguio-Benguet Bishop Carlito Cenzon.
TOOTS SOBERANO

New Baguio bishop sees an 'indigenized' Church

IT may come as a surprise but the Igorots' traditional dance and music, which are under threat of disappearing, are finding their way into the Roman Catholic Church as part of its liturgy and worship rites.

Igorot dances and music, for example, enlivened the March 14 installation rite of Bishop Carlito Cenzon at the Baguio Cathedral.

Donning their traditional striped *tapis* (skirt) and blouses, 24 Ibaloi women from Bokod, Benguet, danced their way to the altar to the sound of gongs and *solibao* (a Benguet drum made of a burrowed meter-long tree trunk and cowhide) during the entrance procession.

Almost the same number of men and women from Kibungan, Benguet, also danced their *sadong* (a sacred dance for women) and *tayaw* (a similarly sacred dance for men) to a livelier tune and beat of gongs and *solibao* during the offertory procession.

A nun also sang an Ilocano version of Psalm 23 (The Lord is My Shepherd) to the tune of an *uggyam*, a sacred Kalinga chant. Other hymns were also translated into local dialects and sang with the distinctly Igorot *Salidummay* and *Dangdang-ay* chorus or refrain.

Extinction

And there were prayers done in six local languages--three Benguet languages such as Kankana-ey, Ibaloi and Kalanguya, and Pangasinan, Ilocano and Tagalog.

In most parts in Benguet, traditional dances and music are on the brink of extinction because people hardly hold the *cañao*, a traditional thanksgiving feast during which animals such as cattle and pigs are offered to *Kabunian* (Igorot term for God) and the spirits.

One reason is economic. It is too costly to hold the *cañao* these days.

Another is the influence of some religious groups, which regard the *cañao* and its accompanying dance and music rites as "pagan" and therefore "un-Christian."

But the Catholic Church has taken the road of what it calls "inculturation" and "indigenization" of its liturgy and worship rites. Both mean integrating or fusing local culture and tradition into the worship and religious rites of the church.

Cenzon, who was installed by Archbishop Antonio Franco, the papal nuncio to the Philippines, says he dreams of finally seeing in the near future "an indigenized Church, which respects the culture and shares the hopes, dreams and even suffering and frustration of the people in the highlands."

Maurice Malanes

This PMA topnotcher wants to meet his estranged father

By Villamor Visaya Jr.
San Manuel, Isabela

WHAT will be the greatest gift that this year's class valedictorian Charlie Domingo Jr. get when he graduates from the Philippine Military Academy on Sunday? A reunion with his estranged father, who had abandoned him and his late mother more than 20 years ago.

Domingo's relatives, who acted as his guardians when his mother Evelyn died in 1983, said they have learned to forgive the misdeeds of his father Charlie Sr.

When the elder Domingo abandoned his family, Charlie Jr., then 6 years old, was left to the care of his uncle, Sinfroso Antonio Jr., 43, and his grandmother Clarita, 67.

Antonio said Domingo's mother was unable to withstand the pain of being abandoned by her husband. Evelyn suffered from depression, got sick and eventually died in 1983.

"Evelyn failed to withstand the emotional pain. She died longing for the return of her husband. Butsoy (Domingo's nickname) was only a Grade 1 pupil then," Antonio said.

He said they wanted Charlie Sr. to share his son's achievements as top graduate of the PMA's Banyuhay Class of 2002. The class has 138 members.

Antonio said it is God's will if Domingo would be reunited with his father on Sunday. "We do not know. This is probably the happiest moment in Charlie's life, if ever (his father will appear and attend his graduation)," Antonio said.

Forgiven

Domingo said he had forgiven his father and his guardians know that.

"In fact, I want to see him and be proud of me on my graduation day, but I don't know where he is. I believe he has a family of his own now," the son said.

Antonio said they tried to locate Domingo's father when he abandoned his family but they failed to find him.

"At first, we wanted to exact revenge on him. Eventually, we decided to forgive him and we just wanted him to be reunited with Charlie," he said. "But past is past. We have learned to forgive him."

Antonio, whom Domingo calls "Papang," and his family will accompany Charlie during the graduation rites.

"'Papang, you will be the one to accompany me,' Charlie told me and I almost cried when we talked over the phone," Antonio said.

CADET First Class Charlie Domingo Jr., PMA Banyuhay Class 2002 topnotcher.
TOOTS SOBERANO

Domingo will receive the presidential saber from President Macapagal-Arroyo. He will also receive the Philippine Navy saber for being the top graduate to join the Navy, and the humanities, languages and leadership plaques for being the class president.

Antonio financed Domingo's elementary and high school education. Antonio, when he was a bachelor, reared Domingo and treated him as the family's youngest brother.

When Antonio married his then girlfriend Leticia in 1983, he took Domingo with him. The couple treated Domingo as their eldest child and the brother of their two daughters, Leah and Liezl, now 18 and 14.

Tested warrior

For one who has experienced hardship early in life, Domingo is a tested "warrior," said Antonio.

When he was studying at the Sandiat Elementary School and at the La Salette of Ramon, Domingo used to sell bananas and *tilapia* to neighbors to augment his meager school allowance.

His relatives said Domingo was determined to get an education and help his family out of poverty. His effort paid off as he graduated valedictorian in elementary and high school.

Because Antonio, his foster father, is a government laborer who does not earn much, Domingo took the examination for a Department of Science and Technology scholarship. He passed it and with his scholarship grant, he studied chemical engineering at the Adamson University in Manila.

He was supposed to enter his fifth and last year in engineering when he decided to enter the PMA.

"His heart is into military service ever since so I supported his move and gave him moral support. My mother (Clarita), however, did not approve of his plan because he has only a year left before graduating as a chemical engineer," Antonio said.

Domingo's first year as a plebe was the hardest, according to Antonio, that he would frequent Baguio to give his nephew moral support.

"It was a very hard year for him. He was looking very frail then but he survived. When we visited him and took him to stroll along Baguio's parks, he would complain that he was sleepy," Antonio said.

He said entering the PMA was Domingo's dream since high school. He was the corps commander during his senior year in high school and he pursued his Advanced Reserve Officers' Training Course in college.

He told his foster parents that he wanted to pursue his love for military service when he finished high school but Antonio objected.

"His body was so frail then and I'm afraid that he would not withstand the physical rigors of training," he said.

Domingo, according to Antonio, has many dreams for his family. He wants to help finance the college education of his two cousins.

"He knows that I have a meager salary so he would like to help although I am not asking for it," Antonio said.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

DFA blames passport shortage on 'upsurge' of Pinoys leaving RP

From page A1

Lecaros said. "Most of them are OFWs (overseas Filipino workers)."

Another report estimated the DFA's current stock at only 350,000 new passports, good for approximately 40 days.

DFA infighting?

Representative Lozada, once the appointments secretary of then President Fidel V. Ramos, said the reported internal conflict involving undersecretaries and assistant secretaries in the DFA was one of the principal reasons for the shortage.

In a statement, he claimed that the squabbling between career officials and political appointees was what bogged down the P4-billion Machine Readable Passport and Visa (MRPV) system.

Lozada cited reports received by his office that the "DFA encountered problems in the contract that was awarded to a Philippine passport corporation," but did not elaborate.

He also took DFA officials to task for failing to anticipate the large number of passport applicants during summer, when many overseas Filipinos come home.

"The problem is the DFA doesn't take into consideration the circumstances that trigger heavy influx of *balikbayans,*" Lozada said.

He said the House foreign relations committee would investigate the shortage in order to recommend measures to prevent it from recurring—without, he said, getting involved in the infighting.

"The problem must be addressed sooner because it is a source of embarrassment for the Philippine government. All steps must be taken to resolve the issue because we are talking here of public service," he said.

But a look at the available statistics on the number of overseas workers deployed (that is, left for abroad in a given year) shows that after contracting significantly in 1995, OCW deployment has been on the increase since 1996. In the first eight months of 2001, the growth rate in the number of OCWs deployed averaged at over 2 percent.

The inquiry is based on a resolution filed by Iloilo Rep. Augusto Syjuco Jr., who said Filipino workers and travelers in the Middle East and Europe were stranded because no new passports were available.

The congressman figured in the news recently when he was ejected from the halls of Congress on March 13 after Deputy Speaker Raul Gonzalez declared him "out of order" for delaying House business.

DFA memo

Buenaventura said he was aware that a memo being circulated by the DFA in its offices and embassies blamed the central bank for the passport shortage, allegedly because of a breakdown in the BSP's printing machines.

But Lecaros told reporters yesterday the "BSP is not to blame. They make deliveries on time. It is the historic rise in demand that is the culprit here."

"The BSP cannot also over-print. The DFA cannot also place orders beyond what is actually needed," he said. "There will be an oversupply. We might face a case at the Ombudsman."

He said the BSP had been delivering the 9,000 passports a day that the DFA needs daily. But since the demand had almost doubled, Lecaros said, the BSP had to speed up delivery of the remaining booklets.

The DFA has already ordered an additional 1.2 million blank passports, Lecaros added.

Buenaventura said that more than half of the 800,000 passports ordered by the DFA last August had been delivered as of March 15, and the rest would be completed by June.

He said the BSP could not say when the printing of the 1.2 million passports ordered by the DFA in January would be completed.

He said the central bank would renegotiate the terms of the new contract covering the 1.2 million passports.

The BSP chief said the central bank was charging the DFA only P132 per passport, while the DFA was selling the passport for more than P600 each.

"The passport printing is not our core business. We do not even earn from it and our charge only covers the cost of production," he said.

Buenaventura said he had discussed the issue with Vice President and Foreign Secretary Teofisto Guingona and they had agreed to investigate the issue. He hinted that a longer-term contract was necessary.

"We told them that if they want us to accelerate the orders made in January, then we may have to renegotiate the contract. We will not stock up on security paper nor expand our printing facilities based on a one-year contract," Buenaventura said.

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1,700 US troops coming

From page A1

capability to defend the country from external threats, and was therefore different from the six-month-long war games now being held in Basilan.

Under Balikatan 02-1, 660 American soldiers, including 160 from the US Special Forces, are helping Filipino troops hunt down the Abu Sayyaf, which the US government has accused of having links to the al-Qaida terror network and which is holding hostage an American couple and a Filipino nurse.

The United States has sought permission to deploy an additional 300 US troops, ostensibly for civic work. But critics say the additional deployment will be in violation of the Terms of Reference (TOR) governing the joint military exercise. ***(See story on Page A1.)***

Generic exercise

Adan said "(the April exercise) is the regular, generic Balikatan that we have been conducting." He said it would be the 17th such exercise between the Philippines and the United States.

He also said it would include exercises of task forces and combined naval forces, Marine training, a combined Air Force event, a combined forces event and civil-military projects.

Its objectives include improving the "interoperability" of Philippine and US forces and combat readiness for combined operations, Agence France Presse quoted Adan as saying.

Asked if other countries would participate in Balikatan 02-2, Adan said this had not yet been discussed.

Tiglao said the forthcoming exercise "is in the nature of the regular Balikatan," and "does not require a TOR."

On the other hand, Balikatan 02-1 is "a special Balikatan because it is in an area of conflict (Basilan) and geared toward fighting a terrorist organization (the Abu Sayyaf)," he said.

Peace mission

A team of parliamentarians, social activists and scholars from Europe, Asia and the United States is to make a trip to Basilan next week to investigate the impact of the US troop deployment in Southern Philippines, according to Filipino professor Walden Bello.

The 14-member "international peace mission" is to hold consultations with local officials, community leaders and military commanders and join public hearings by a congressional committee on human and civil rights.

Among the mission members are Sen. Kraisak Choonavan of Thailand, European parliamentarians Pierre Rousette and Matti Wuori, and a member of Australia's New South Wales Legislative Council, Lee Rhiannon, said Bello, the mission's convenor. ***With an AFP report***

And 300 more going to Basilan to do civic work

From page A1

there was a need for "another round of talks" to amend the TOR or put up another exercise "only for civil affairs" to justify the presence of additional US troops in Basilan.

He said the TOR covering Balikatan 02-1 was formulated to allow for clarification of questions concerning the exercise.

Asked why more US troops were needed when Filipino engineers could do the job, Adan cited the question of availability of resources.

"AFP engineering battalions are also engaged in engineering projects all over the land," he said. "It can be that AFP engineering units will come in handy, but we are not yet at that stage."

Besides, he said, AFP engineering units would be involved in the RP-US Balikatan 02-2 scheduled to start next month in Central Luzon. ***(See story on Page A1.)***

"It's like asking, 'Why not let the AFP handle (the Abu Sayyaf in) Basilan?' The answer is, 'We are doing this shoulder-to-shoulder exercise so that we can solve the problem,'" Adan said in Taglish.

Messy

Lozada said he would write Vice President and Foreign Secretary Teofisto Guingona Jr. to inquire about "the status of the request for additional US troops."

"(He) is not saying anything, so here we go again," Lozada told the INQUIRER. "He should say something."

Lozada said "what is messy here is again the President is saying she has not received the request, but (Defense) Secretary (Angelo) Reyes said it is being discussed in the lower level."

"Whether you discuss this at the higher or lower level, the question is: Is there really a request?" said Lozada, who had been criticizing US military operations in Basilan.

The lawmaker said he was raising questions to determine if proper procedures regarding the US military presence were being observed. He cited the fact that Balikatan 02-1 started even before the TOR had been signed.

He said the deployment of 300 more US troops required a new TOR because the existing document covered only the 660 American soldiers now in Basilan and Zamboanga.

"The Philippine government must first give its approval before additional troops come here," he said. "But before this approval is given, there has to be a proper request (from the US) and negotiations for new terms of reference."

Lozada also said a supplemental TOR could not cover the additional deployment, as some defense officials had suggested, because this would mean that Balikatan 02-1 had to be stopped in order to renegotiate the existing terms.

Rigoberto Tiglao, spokesperson for the President, said any change in the TOR would be studied once formal proposals to increase the number of US troops had been submitted by American and Filipino military officers involved in Balikatan 02-1.

"If there is validity and it does not break any of our laws, why not?" Tiglao said at his regular briefing.

AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Diomedio Villanueva asked critics to withhold judgment for the time being.

He said the additional US troops would be deployed "purely for civic missions" and "will not engage in combat."

"These are engineers," Villanueva added. "If they can help our operations, there's nothing wrong with that. Let's give them a chance, let us not prejudge them."

Security

But Sen. Rodolfo Biazon pointed out that more American troops would require the Philippines to deploy more Filipino soldiers and policemen for security purposes.

Biazon, vice chair of the Senate committee on national defense and security, cited Annex L, Appendix V of the Exercise Plan for the Balikatan, which provides that the host government shall be responsible for the overall security of US forces participating in the war games.

The senator said the additional US troops, "especially those who will be involved in civic activities such as the building of schoolhouses, bridges, roads and the conduct of medical and dental missions," should be put in "safe areas."

This is so as "not to strain the availability of the troops needed in actual combat operations against the Abu Sayyaf, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the New People's Army," he said.

Biazon also said the need for the AFP and Philippine National Police to adequately secure the US troops had become even more urgent with the reported assassination plots against the American forces.

"I do not oppose the arrival of additional US troops provided they are not involved in combat operations," he added.

Infrastructure

Victoriano Lecaros, spokesperson for the Department of Foreign Affairs, said the US engineers and their equipment would be needed in Basilan and elsewhere in Mindanao because local civilian contractors were afraid of being kidnapped by the Abu Sayyaf.

He said the infrastructure needed in Mindanao, specifically in Basilan, required the services of contractors. He said the AFP engineering brigade had the expertise but not the equipment to carry out the projects.

"The American government appreciates the nature of the needs of the people in Basilan. Infrastructure such as farm-to-market roads, bridges and schools are among the most needed," Lecaros said, adding that the AFP had sought the help of US engineers to enable them to help "rebuild" the province. ***With reports from Cynthia D. Balana and Christine Herrera***

AFP looking for 4 tons of explosives

From page A1

Ghozi, said four tons of explosives were discovered to be missing when commercial suppliers were ordered to check their inventories after the Indonesian's arrest.

A supplier with offices in Cebu City could not account for about four tons of explosives that, according to authorities, Al-Ghozi might have bought.

According to the Washington Post News Service, some investigators suspect that Al-Ghozi might have told authorities about the cache of explosives in General Santos City to divert their attention from the larger shipments he might already have delivered.

Al-Ghozi, who has confessed to his membership in Jemaah Islamiyah in Singapore and Malaysia, was allegedly sent several times by the militant Muslim group to the Philippines to procure explosives.

Jemaah Islamiyah has been linked to Osama bin Laden's international terrorist network.

Authorities have found Al-Ghozi's confession to be credible.

He reportedly told investigators that he learned to handle explosives in a camp on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. He also had allegedly confessed to playing a role in the bombing of the Light Rail Transit in Manila that killed 22 people in December 2000.

The search for the missing explosives has raised concerns that the Philippines has become a major source of explosives for terrorist attacks in Southeast Asia.

Last Wednesday, the Philippine National Police Aviation Security Group arrested three Indonesians at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

The three reportedly had with them an undetermined amount of C-4 explosives and bomb materials.

Immigration Commissioner Andrea Domingo said authorities had also arrested a Japanese national and several Middle Easterners with alleged links to the al-Qaida network.

"We have detained them and we have refused to recommend bail for their temporary release," she said.

Domingo met with FBI Director Robert Mueller and briefed him on the investigation of the three Indonesian terrorist suspects—Agus Wirkina, Tamsil Linrung and Abdul Jemmal Balsas.

Like Al-Ghozi, the three Indonesians are believed to have links with Jemaah Islamiyah. They are now under the custody of the PNP.

Domingo said Mueller was pleased with the immigration bureau's efforts in counter-terrorism.

"He thanked the bureau for the arrests it had made," she said. ***Reports by Martin P. Marfil and Norman Bordadora***

Reds announce . . .

From page A1

predominantly Catholic population and even if there is no ceasefire declaration, we will not launch offensive military operations," Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal, spokesperson of the Communist Party of the Philippines, yesterday said in Filipino in a phone interview over RMN radio.

Rosal is also the spokesperson of the New People's Army, the CPP's armed wing. On Good Friday, March 29, the NPA will mark its 33rd founding anniversary.

Top-ranking government officials issued conflicting statements on the possibility of the government declaring a ceasefire.

"There is no ceasefire because I don't think they (rebels) will honor a ceasefire," National Security Adviser Roilo Golez said in a chance interview with Malacañang reporters.

"Judging from their record, it is not productive to have a ceasefire with the CPP-NPA," Golez said.

But Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes has recommended to President Macapagal-Arroyo a five-day truce from Holy Wednesday to Easter Sunday, according to presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao.

"Secretary Reyes is willing. There's no problem with the secretary of defense," Tiglao said during his regular press briefing.

Tiglao said the President was set to decide on Reyes' recommendation either yesterday or today.

When told about Golez's statement, Tiglao said: "The national security adviser is not the secretary of national defense."

"Probably he would like to be secretary of national defense," Tiglao said of Golez.

In the radio interview, Rosal said that based on his three-decade experience in the underground revolutionary movement, NPA members do not launch attacks during the Holy Week.

"We don't undertake operations except in very exceptional circumstances," Rosal said. He did not say what days were covered by the NPA's truce.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police are not taking any chances. They will be placed on heightened alert to thwart attacks by communist rebels amid intelligence reports the ranks of the rebels have increased.

"The Armed Forces of the Philippines is anticipating the possibility of the NPA conducting terrorist activities during the last week of March, which coincides with the Holy Week and so, together with the PNP, the AFP is calling for a heightened alert during these days," said the military spokesperson, Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan.

Clashes between soldiers and communist rebels occurred the past few days. A clash in Antipolo left an NPA member killed.

Military records showed the strength of the NPA swelled by several hundreds to 11,930 at the end of 2001. Their firearms increased to 7,156 in the same period, from 6,851 in 2000.

The NPA strength reached a peak of about 27,000 with more than 15,000 firearms in 1987, but the collapse of communism worldwide and infighting among its leaders have reduced its numbers over the years.

Although the Abu Sayyaf is the target of the largest deployment of US combat troops in Mindanao, the NPA is the biggest military threat to the government, according to Defense Secretary Reyes.

He pointed out that the Abu Sayyaf's presence was confined to the provinces of Basilan and Jolo while the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, a much larger force than the bandit group, was concentrated in some parts of Mindanao.

"We have only one nationwide threat, the CPP-NPA-NDF," Reyes said at a press conference on Monday at the Camp Adriano Hernandez, headquarters of the Army's Task Group Panay, in Iloilo.

Ms Macapagal suspended talks with the communist rebels last year after the NPA assassinated two members of the House of Representatives.

Reyes said peace negotiations with the rebel groups were continuing although the government had adopted "backroom negotiations" instead of formal talks.

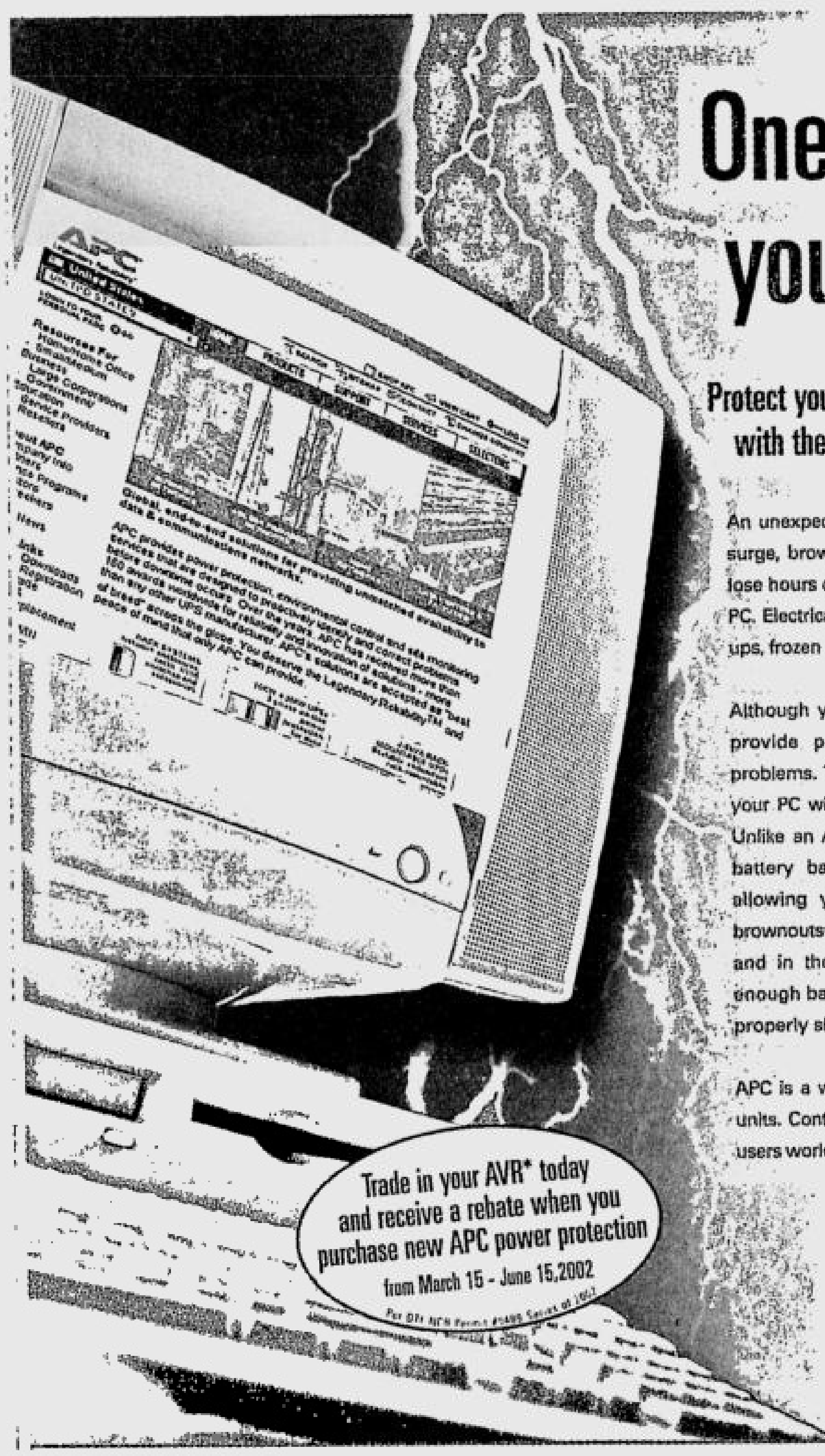
In an e-mailed statement, the National Democratic Front (NDF), the political arm of the CPP, said back-channel talks "cannot replace the serious hard work carried out by the negotiating panels, their subcommittees, consultants and staff."

Luis Jalandoni, NDF peace panel chair, said the Macapagal administration was scuttling the peace talks by not honoring the agreements reached between the rebel group and the previous administrations.

"With one sweep of the hand, Ms Macapagal threatens to wipe away all these bilateral agreements. She shows no desire to engage in peace talks that address the roots of the armed conflict. Instead she calls for capitulation and threatens all-out war," Jalandoni said.

He called Reyes' statements "malicious, similar to his announcement over the radio more than a month ago, when the US troops were arriving, that after the Abu Sayyaf the next target is the NPA."

In a separate statement dated March 18, CPP founding chair Jose Maria Sison called the President "a marionette of the US. She pretends to be for peace negotiations and yet she unleashes brutal campaigns of suppression."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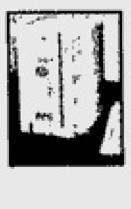

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House to block Mark Jimenez extradition?

From page A1

He noted that the Supreme Court had already ruled that Congress cannot be the refuge of wrongdoers, when it belatedly upheld the suspension of then-Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago in another case. Jimenez' position as elected representative of Manila's sixth district—which incidentally includes Malacañang—does not grant him immunity from extradition, Gonzalez said. Otherwise, it would be tantamount to Congress abrogating the country's extradition treaty with the United States.

According to Gonzalez, House Assistant Majority Leader Francis Escudero agreed that a congressman enjoys immunity from arrest only when Congress is in session and when the penalty for his crime does not exceed six years.

US concern

The United States conveyed its concern to President Macapagal-Arroyo that the government might block the Jimenez extradition the other day, when US Federal Bureau of Investigation Director Robert Mueller paid a call on the President.

Presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said the United States was "worried" about the possibility, but added that the President assured Mueller that she would not block the extradition if the courts uphold the legality of the US request.

Speaking of Mueller, Tiglao said: "He's glad the President understands (the government position). They could be worried that (the government) would be blocking (Jimenez' extradition) because he's a congressman." Tiglao said some US officials may have thought that the government would pull out all the stops to protect its congressmen.

But US officials may have another reason: Jimenez is always around the President whenever she visits Manila. He was also among the select few seen at the People Power I anniversary rites last month.

Tiglao denied that Jimenez was close to the President or First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo. "She hasn't had a one-on-one meeting with (Jimenez). They're definitely not close. He's not an ally," he insisted.

Jimenez, he said, is "just another congressman facing extradition."

At the House of Representatives, three congressmen took exception to the report that Mueller had urged the President to expedite Jimenez' extradition.

"Even if he's not a congressman, he deserves due process," Leyte Rep. Ted Failon said.

Manila Rep. Harry Angping described Mueller's request as undue pressure on the government and the judicial system.

"They should not dictate on us," Angping said. "There must be mutual respect of our laws. We are a sovereign nation."

He also did not take kindly to Mueller's reference to the controversial congressman as "Mr. Jimenez," saying the latter was after all a "duly elected congressman with a term expiring in June 2004.""

House Majority Leader Neptali Gonzales II said he hoped Mueller's request "was not a precondition to whatever decisions the executive might take."

"Let the courts decide and it should not be influenced by Mueller's statement," Gonzales said.

House rules

The ranking official who declined to be identified said if the courts allowed the extradition, Congress would have to step in because the ruling would mean it had to expel or suspend Jimenez.

To expel or suspend him, however, the House has to find Jimenez guilty of committing a "misbehavior or misconduct in office," which can be subject to a vote of two-thirds of the House.

"But under our rules, we can only punish a congressmen with expulsion or suspension for a cause committed in the lifetime of a Congress which he is a member of," the official said. He said that Jimenez' alleged acts were committed when he was not yet a congressman and thus the 12th Congress could have no jurisdiction over his case.

But Gonzalez, a prosecutor during Estrada's impeachment trial, said the extradition issue was out of Congress' hands. "From our end in Congress, there's nothing we can do. His case is not within our province because what we can do is expel or censure a member for disorderly conduct committed during the present Congress."

Gonzalez asked the courts to expedite the extradition case "in order to settle this problem once and for all."

He said that while there should be no "legal shortcuts," it was important that the extradition process be put back on track so as not to jeopardize relations with the United States.

The Department of Justice is currently waiting for the Manila Regional Trial Court to rule on Jimenez' petition to declare the US request for his extradition as illegal.

Gonzalez said he hoped Mueller's statement was not meant to pressure the government. "I hope not, but there seems to be a quid pro quo being dangled before us in the case of (Charlie) Atong Ang and Yolanda Ricaforte," two key witnesses in the impeachment trial.

But in Malacañang, Tiglao denied there was such a quid pro quo. "No, that's not true. Not at all. There's no exchange (of fugitives) at all," Tiglao said.

"The President's position is that we can not interfere with the rule of law. That's a major principle of this administration," Tiglao said.

"(But) if the court denies his petition, we will not pose any objection to his extradition. We just have to follow the order of the court," he added.

With a report from Rocky Nazareno

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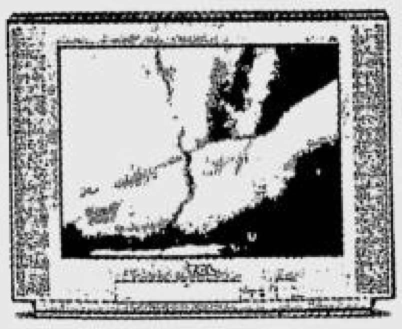

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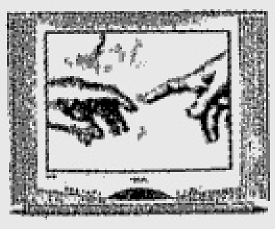

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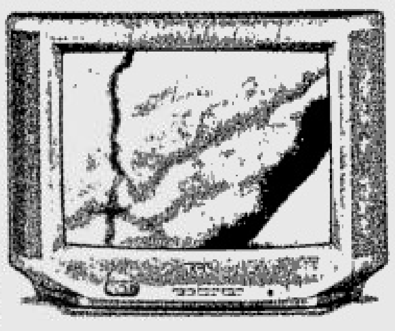

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What the public should know about

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Jancom Environmental Corporation, in partnership with Vivendi Environnement, will finance, install, operate and maintain an integrated waste management system widely used today in most modern cities and urban centers.

With its sophisticated and state-of-the-art technology and cutting-edge equipment, the Jancom project will provide the most efficient, economical, permanent and lasting solution to Metro Manila's garbage problem.

Vivendi, Jancom's principal partner, is rated no. 1 in Europe and no. 2 in the world in waste management operations. It presently operates 93 waste-to-energy plants and 134 sanitary landfill facilities in over 40 countries and territories in five (5) continents. It employs 65,000 people, servicing 50 million people all around the globe.

Jancom's project has three major components: a) Materials Recovery Facilities (MRFs), b) a sanitary landfill facility, and c) waste-to-energy plant using state-of-the-art technology, the implementation of which can be deferred at the option of the government.

Serious issues and concerns have been raised against the project. Our answers:

1. **Jancom's tipping fee of US$32 for an integrated sanitary landfill facility or US$59 for a thermal plant is reasonable and one of the lowest in the world.** A matrix of tipping fees in Europe and the United States, as shown by NEDA's studies and report, indicate that the average tipping fee for a waste-to-energy plant ranges from US$75 to US$103 per ton. The average tipping fee of modern sanitary landfill facilities worldwide ranges from US$38 to US$60. Hongkong's sanitary landfill facility and transfer stations are the best prototypes of the facility proposed by Jancom since it is being operated by Vivendi, its principal partner in this project. **There is no basis to compare Jancom's tipping fee with that of another firm offering only US$18.89. The technologies and terms of reference are different.** A panel of technical experts from accredited international agencies could rule on these disparities in the tipping fee offers. This is the most expeditious manner the government can solve the issue.

2. **The US$32 per ton tipping fee for a sanitary landfill facility will mean that every household of five will be paying only P122.40 a month, not P600 as claimed by some quarters.** Studies show that a typical household of 5 generates an average of 2.5 kilos of garbage a day or 75 kilos a month. Multiply 75 kilos by US$.032, the unit cost per kilo, and convert it into pesos at the current exchange rate of P51, and you will come up with P122.40. The amount comes down to PhP 0.89 per person, per day. Moreover, a study conducted by the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) on solid waste management showed that Metro Manilans have been spending US$1 or P51 per capita (at the current exchange rate) per month or US$5 or P255 per household. The study rounded up the average solid waste management cost for Metro Manila at US$80 per ton. Note, however, that the JICA study was conducted in 1997 when the parity of the peso to the US dollar was only P25 to US$1 and the currency crisis has not yet visited the Asian economies. **Can the government afford Jancom's proposed tipping fee? Certainly. In fact, it will be paying much less than what it is spending at present; the great disparity in the quality and efficacy of the systems notwithstanding.**

3. **The Project is not overpriced**. There could be no overprice in the cost of the project. Jancom and Vivendi are financing the entire project: about US$400 million for the waste-to-energy plant or over US$150 million if only a sanitary landfill and the materials recovery facilities will be operated. The government is not spending a single centavo for the project. The project costs, as determined by the Investment Coordinating Committee-Technical Board, includes engineering, procurement, construction, transport equipment and vehicles, physical contingencies, interests, operation and maintenance. The tipping fee Jancom and Vivendi will collect over the years represents payment for their services, **not the project's cost.**

4. **Jancom will not have a monopoly of the garbage disposal service.** Metro Manila generates around 8,000 tons a day. Jancom's contract is only for 3,000 tons. **The government can farm out contracts for the rest to other qualified proponents.**

5. **No anomaly or irregularity attended the bidding and negotiations on the project.** Jancom participated in a fair and open bidding. Of the 11 firms which originally submitted prequalification bids, Jancom was one of only three who got prequalified. It was the only bidder for the San Mateo Project. Before it could start negotiations with the government, it was required to post a bond for P76.44 million. The entire bidding process and detailed discussions of the vital components of the project with six (6) separate interagency committees, namely: Presidential Task Force on Waste Management, the Prequalification, Bid and Awards Committee, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority, the Executive Committee, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the National Economic Development Authority, were conducted with complete transparency and due diligence. It took almost four years of study and evaluation by high officials and technical experts from the government before the contract was signed on December 19, 1997. No special favor was ever extended to Jancom by the government. In spite of the endorsement of President Fidel V. Ramos and his cabinet, in its last meeting on the Jancom project, the Estrada Administration still conducted a new bidding for a sanitary landfill even as Jancom's contract specifically included a sanitary landfill facility as one of the three major components of its project. Jancom went to court to assert and protect its rights and interests. The recent Supreme Court's decision affirmed the lower court's ruling upholding the validity of Jancom's contract with the government. **Jancom won in the bidding fair and square.**

6. **Jancom's contract and project do not violate any law.** Section 20 of the Clean Air Act does not absolutely prohibit incineration as a mode of waste disposal; rather only those burning processes which emit poisonous and toxic fumes are banned. Vivendi's technology precludes this. The entire operations of Jancom's project follows the specific provisions of the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act with respect to reduction, segregation, recycling, and composting. Jancom complied with all the requirements under the Build-Operate-Transfer law. **It will meet the government's environmental and safety standards. The contract clearly stipulates this.**

7. **There is no issue involving the ownership of Jancom.** Jancom International of Australia transferred its interests and rights over the contract to Jancom Environmental Corporation. **An internal agreement spells out the respective rights and participation of all parties involved in the project.**

WE HAVE RECORDS AND DOCUMENTS TO VALIDATE OUR STATEMENTS.

During the early part of President Arroyo's Administration, MMDA Chairman Benjamin Abalos, in a series of meetings, discussed with Jancom and Vivendi a possible Compromise Agreement for the immediate operation of a sanitary landfill facility and its basic components and requirements as a partial implementation of the contract and the project.

Jancom and Vivendi are prepared to fulfill their commitments and implement all or two of the major components of the project. If the government decides to postpone the waste-to-energy facility, Jancom and Vivendi already have two sites for their sanitary landfill facility. They will construct the sanitary landfill facility within 6 months and the state-of-the-art transfer stations within a year from receipt of the Notice to Proceed.

The black propaganda campaign against our project distorts the facts to mislead the public and discredit Jancom and Vivendi.

JANCOM SIGNED THE CONTRACT IN GOOD FAITH.
IT IS CONFIDENT THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT WILL HONOR IT.

UP tops bar examinations

From page A1

graduate Jesus Paolo U. Protacio is in second place with an average score of 90.05 percent.

The others in the Top 10 are Anthony Mark A. Gutierrez, AdMU; Solomon F. Lumba, UP; Katrina Diane Noelle C. Monsod, AdMU; Ma. Theresa U. Ballelos, UP; Amabelle Grace G. Mascardo, Silliman University; Adonis V. Gabriel, San Beda College; John Noah M. Red, AdMU; and Dante Bravo, San Beda College.

A son of a Manila judge, Ponferrada graduated class valedictorian last year. He bested 3,848 bar applicants who took the examinations on Sept. 2, 9, 16 and 23 last year at the De La Salle University in Manila.

Michael Cucio, the INQUIRER's research section head, was one of the successful bar examinees.

Out of 3,849 examinees, only 1,266 passed the bar or a passing percentage of 32.89 percent.

Davide inhibits self

Chief Justice Hilario G. Davide Jr. inhibited himself in the deliberations of the court en banc because one of the examinees was his nephew. Senior Associate Justice Josue Bellosillo presided over the deliberations and authorized the release of the results.

The results were released at 9:15 last night by the Office of the Bar Confidant headed by Cristina B. Layusa.

The 2001 Committee on bar examinations was chaired by Supreme Court Associate Justice Sabino R. de Leon Jr., an alumnus of the AdMU Law School.

The committee members were retired Judge Samilo Barlongay, lawyer Luis Ermitano, retired Justices Hector Hofileña, Romeo Escareal, Jesus Elbinias, and lawyers Reynaldo Geronimo, Rosario Lopez and Isidro Zarraga.

The new lawyers will take their oath on April 30 at 2:30 p.m. at the Plenary Hall of the Philippine International Convention Center.

UP topnotchers

In 2000, UP law graduate Eliseo Zuñiga Jr. bested 978 bar examinees to secure the top spot.

Zuñiga got 90.6 percent, a .05-percent edge over Ateneo De Davao University graduate Arvin Dexter Lopoz who scored 90.55.

The Supreme Court said 979 represented only 20.84 percent of those who took the bar exams at the time.

Four other UP law graduates made it to the Top 10—the fifth, seventh (tie) and tenth.

During the 1999 bar exams, Florin Hilbay, a UP law alumnus, shared first place with Ateneo De Manila's Edwin Enrile with an 88.50 percent.

Five other UP law graduates made it to the Top 10.

In 1998, the Baguio Colleges Foundation stunned the legal profession when its graduate bagged first place. UP also got four slots—the first, seventh, eight and ninth. The passing percentile was 39.63 percent.

The passing percentile in 1999 was 16.59, considered one of the lowest in the history of the bar exams.

So far, the highest passing rate, 43.71 percent, was in 1981.

A bar applicant may be deemed to have passed the examinations successfully if he has obtained a general average of 75 percent in all subjects without failing to 50 percent in any subject.

In determining the average, subjects in the examination shall be given the following relative weights: Civil Law (15 percent); Labor and Social Legislation (10 percent); Mercantile Law (15 percent); Criminal Law (10 percent); Political and International Law (15 percent); Taxation (10 percent); Remedial Law (20 percent); Legal Ethics and Practical Exercises (5 percent).

Erap . . .

From page A1

Crespo, told the INQUIRER.

Jimenez, first-term representative of Manila's sixth district, said he was busy seeing to the welfare of his constituents in Pandacan.

Though he was mum on his extradition, Jimenez was chatty about his admiration for President Macapagal-Arroyo.

He said Ms Macapagal was the most hardworking President he ever knew.

"She has the sincerity to make our country a better place to live in. And she works hard, she rises up very early in the morning and just keeps on working. I believe in this kind of leader," said Jimenez who served as an adviser for Latin-American affairs of ousted President Joseph Estrada. No doubt, impressed with his advice, Estrada called Jimenez a corporate genius.

Jimenez said there would be no more uprisings from the Estrada supporters because the President was doing the right thing.

"I don't believe (there will be an Edsa IV) because people are tired. They want to move forward. The people want President Macapagal-Arroyo to succeed," he told the INQUIRER on Monday.

Jimenez said Filipinos should stop "thinking (political) revolution" but participate in "economic revolution."

He said the President was on the right track particularly in economic reforms.

High-profile charity

Since he became a member of Congress, Jimenez has been known to pull off high-profile charity projects although he himself rarely grants media interviews.

He refused to make further comments about FBI Director Robert Mueller's statement to President Macapagal that Jimenez's swift extradition is important to the US government.

When first asked to comment, Jimenez said he was unaware of Mueller's comments but stated that his case was pending before the Manila Regional Trial Court and should be resolved there.

He also rejected Mueller's suggestion of exchanging him with several Filipinos like Estrada associates Atong Ang and Yolanda Ricaforte, both of whom Manila wants extradited. He said an exchange was only for those charged with heinous crimes.

Jimenez was indicted in a Florida court in 1999 for tax evasion, mail fraud and making illegal contributions to the Democratic Party.

His case notwithstanding, Jimenez ran for Congress during the 2001 national elections and won.

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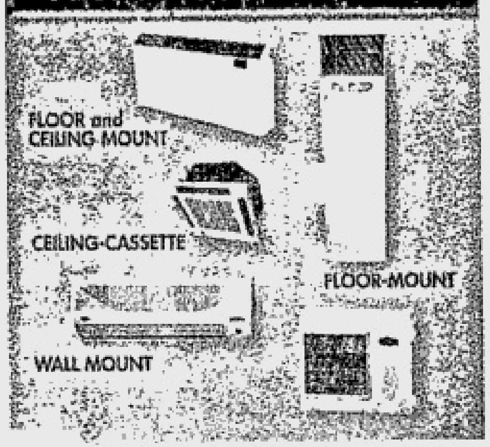

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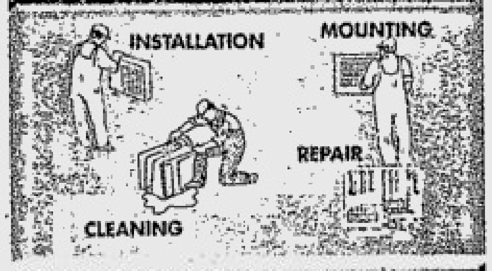

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Matandan bikefest set

DEFENDING champion Enrique Domingo heads the participants in the Matandân Centennial town fiesta invitational cycling classic slated on Saturday. Mayor Ferdinand Calimlim Jr. and vice mayor Adolfo Aquino are staking cash prizes and trophies for the 115-km race. Race director is former Tour of Luzon champion Jesus A. Garcia.

SPORTS

Editor Al S. Mendoza ◎ Assistant Editor Edwin M. Villanueva

SPORTS ON TV

Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

BASKETBALL: NBA - Milwaukee Bucks vs Orlando Magic at 9 a.m. (r – 4:30 p.m. and 9 p.m.) on ESPN

US NCAA - 2002 Postseason NIT Tournament at 1 p.m. and midnight on ESPN

TENNIS: Pacific Life Open, Highlights at 9 a.m. (r) on Star Sports

SAMSUNG CUP

Purefoods beats Shell, regains lead

GAME TOMORROW (Makati Coliseum)
6 p.m.—RP-Hapee vs Alaska

PUREFOODS rode on another explosive performance by Derrick Brown to subdue Shell, 92-87, last night and move closer toward its goal of topping the elimination round of the PBA Samsung Governors Cup.

Brown lit up the Cuneta Astrodome with a game-high 41 points as the Hotdogs improved to a 6-win, 1-loss record under the guidance of interim coach Ryan Gregorio.

"Again my imports delivered," said Gregorio, who is calling the shots in the absence of national coach Eric Altamirano.

Brown scored 21 points in the first half, continued his scoring in the second half and completed his heroics with a three-pointer that quelled the Turbochargers' final rally.

The Turbochargers suffered their fifth straight defeat and are at the cellar with a 1-6 card.

With their second three-game winning streak, the Hotdogs pulled ahead of the Batang Red Bull Thunder, who hold a 5-1 record.

PUREFOODS 92—Brown 41, White 17, Evangelista 11, Magsanoc 9, Patrimonio 6, Raymundo 4, Yee 2, Yap 2, Mendiola 0.

SHELL 87—Jones 36, Dela Cruz 22, Willingham 8, Wainwright 6, Hrabak 6, Bajar 4, Sison 3, Paras 2, Lim 0, Marzan 0, Del Rosario 0.

Quarters: 27-22, 50-45, 69-59, 92-87.

Spring Oil bolsters lineup for ABC tilt

By Roy Luarca

SPRING Cooking Oil is strengthening its lineup in preparation for the coming Asian Basketball Confederation (ABC) Champions Cup where it will be representing the Philippines.

Bert Pulido, general manager of the Cooking Oil Experts co-owned by Tac Padilla and Herbert de Jesus, told the INQUIRER yesterday that they are looking for a tall import and two locals to beef up their roster for the Champions Cup set in Kuala Lumpur from April 28-May 5.

The Cooking Oil Experts of coach Tito Palma have enlisted the services of College of St. Benilde standout Sunday Salvacion, but still need two good players to be competitive against Asia's best club teams.

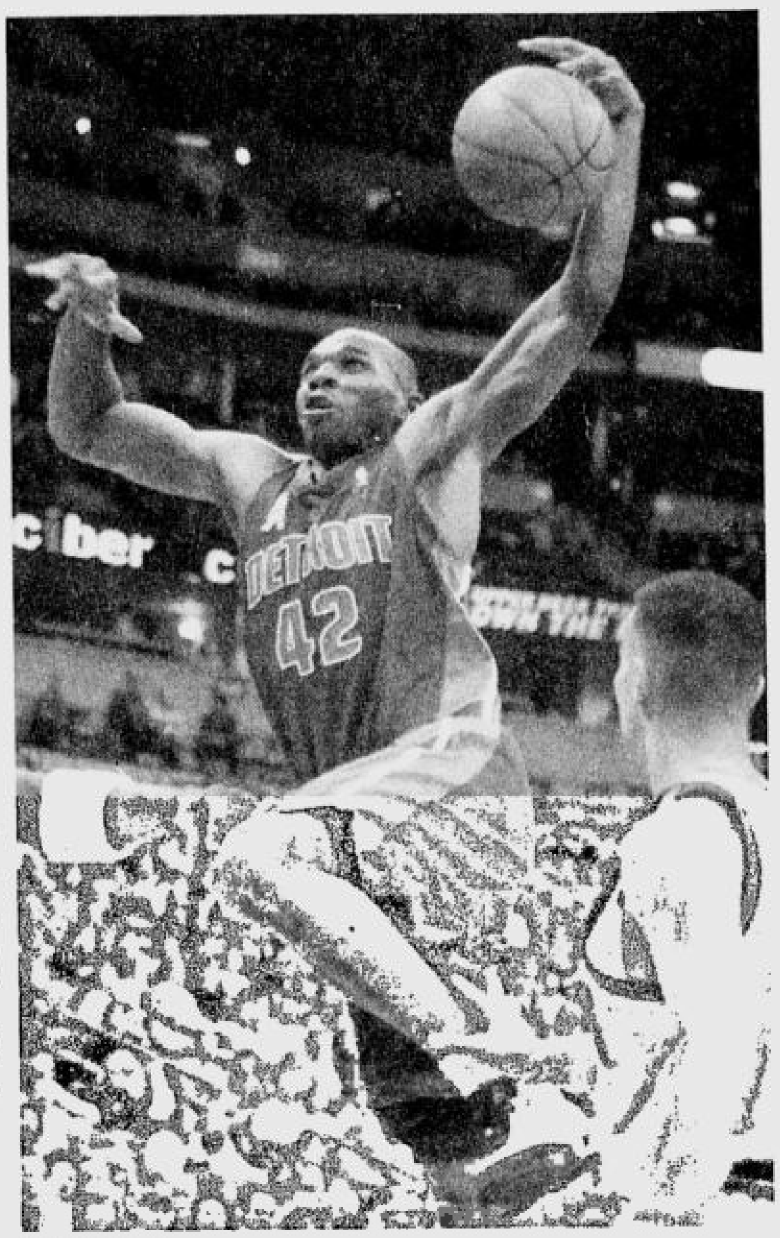
Pulido said they have given their players a break after participating in several tournaments where they have always landed in the semifinals or the finals, but will resume training on April 1.

Formed only last year, Spring Cooking Oil is the reigning titlist in the National Open, the Danny Espiritu Cup and the Mayor Atienza Cup. It swept the elimination round, but lost to Guardo-M. Lhuillier in the final of the recent Southeast Asian Basketball Association (Seaba) Champion's Cup in Cebu City.

That time, seven-time best import awardee Bobby Parks and Hamsa Jihad reinforced the Cooking Oil Experts. Parks is sure to be retained, but the Cooking Oil Experts need somebody taller than the 6-foot-4 Jihad.

Spring Cooking Oil, however, earned the right to carry the country's colors because Guardo-M. Lhuillier, supported by Cebu Basketball League president and Osaka Iridology owner Jonathan Guardo, was only a guest entry.

Assisting Palma at the Spring Cooking Oil bench is Ricky Magallanes, incoming coach of PATTS.



NBA ACTION
Detroit Pistons guard Jerry Stackhouse (42) leaps past Denver Nuggets guard Carlos Arroyo for two points that brought the Piston bench to their feet in the first quarter yesterday. The Pistons won, 98-91, to lead the Central Division. Complete results: Portland 100, Boston 91; Charlotte 113, Milwaukee 110; Detroit 98, Denver 91; L.A. Clippers 93, Houston 86; Washington 99, Golden State 96. AP

BAP-PBL ties improve; junior team joining Cup

AS A proof of the improving relations between the PBL and the BAP, the national 18-under squad will see action in the President's Cup slated on April 3 at the Makati Coliseum.

"We felt the need to help the Philippine training pool by giving them the needed exposure and experience by playing against PBL teams. I hope this will be the start of harmonious relationship between the two leagues," PBL Commissioner Chino Trinidad told yesterday's PSA Forum sponsored by Red Bull and Agfa Color at the Holiday Inn.

National junior coach Johnny Tam also welcomed the move, saying the nationals will gain a lot from playing in the PBL. "Our players need to sharpen their skills against highly rated foes."

Deputy commissioner Tommy Ong, who represented the PBL in talking with Tam and BAP executive-president Christian Tan. Graham Lim, secretary general, also supported the entry of the youthful dribblers to the PBL.

Dennis U. Eroa

SPORTSWATCH

Lanao venue impresses Buhain

PHILIPPINE Sports Commission chair Eric Buhain yesterday said he was impressed with the Lanao del Norte Sports Complex, one of the two possible sites of this year's Palarong Pambansa set for May 18. Buhain said he didn't have high expectations of the complex, which was built two years ago purposely for the Palarong Pambansa hosting which was twice postponed for various reasons. "I never thought it was this good and I now realized how people and officials here are very serious about bringing the Palaro here in Lanao del Norte," said Buhain, who conducted the ocular inspection over the weekend. However, this year's hosting is still a toss-up between Lanao del Norte and Naga City, which has the strong backing of the Department of Education regional directors.

AIM stages 2 golf tourneys

THE ASIAN Institute of Management Alumni Association will be holding two golf tournaments—the 1st President's Cup on March 22 at the Couples Course of Riviera Golf and Country Club in Silang, Cavite, and the 5th AIM Challenge Cup on April 12 at the Aoki Course of Eagle Ridge in Gen. Trias, Cavite. Randy Ang, assistant tournament committee chair and AIM MBM '82, said that the tournaments are expected to bring in some of corporate world's most prominent executives and managers. "It also aims to raise funds for the AIM Scholarship Fund which provides educational opportunities to competent degree holders and executives," said Ang. The 1st President's Cup and The 5th AIM Challenge Cup are just two out of the full slate of events leading up to the celebration of the 31st AIM Alumni Homecoming. For more information, call Lourdes Co at 892-4011 loc. 541.

San Fernando hosts Speedfest

AUTOCROSS and karting will take centerstage when the MP Turbo Speedfest starts its racing season with a twin event dubbed as Auto Madness 2002 this weekend in San Fernando, Pampanga. Presented by the Laus Group of Companies, BPI Family bank and Robinsons Stanmills-San Fernando, the event combines the automotive display of major manufacturers and dealer as well as the exciting races. "We are very happy to be invited by Auto Madness as their special event this weekend," said MP Turbo chief organizer Mike Potenciano. "We have been hoping since 1997 to go back and hold the races here in Pampanga." Autocross is similar to tarmac slalom, except that time brackets are used to determine the winner. The driver who will post the time nearest to his nominated bracket – without going over – will be the winner.

Capriati replaces Venus as No. 1

MIAMI, Florida—Jennifer Capriati replaced fellow American Venus Williams atop the WTA Tour rankings in the latest list released here Monday, while Martina Hingis moved up to third despite an upset loss in the Indian Wells finals. Capriati overtook Williams by 151 points because Williams did not play at Indian Wells. The reigning US Open champion held onto second but Belgium's Kim Clijsters fell two spots to fifth, allowing Hingis and No. 4 Lindsay Davenport to advance. Slovakian teen Daniela Hantuchova, who upset Swiss star Hingis 6-3, 6-4 at the tier one hardcourt event finals Sunday in California, jumped from 26th to 17th in the ratings. Monica Seles improved three spots to ninth, moving past Belgium's Justine Henin and Yugoslavia's Jelena Dokic. Serena Williams slid three places to ninth with French No. 1 Amelie Mauresmo remaining 10th.

PARTICIPANTS & GUESTS to the
02 NATIONAL CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP

CHESS FEVER
National Chess Federation of the Philippines president Mat V. Defensor (seated, right) performs the ceremonial moves with NCFP vice president Andres G. Gatmaitan kicking off the National Chess Championship now ongoing at the Greenhills Shopping Center. From are IA Rolando Yutuc, Willy Abalos, Gene Poliarco, GM Eugene Torre and NCFP secretary general Sammy Estimo.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1990, Michael Misa beat Randy Villanueva, 6-1, 6-1, to clinch the boys' 16-and-under title of the Prince Asian Challenge Circuit tennis championship at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center. Also today in 1992, Paeng Nepomuceno posted 2540 pins while Irene Garcia rolled 2366 to bag the Masters titles in the 9th TBAP Open tournament at the Green Valley lanes.

The other Schumacher stars in Sepang

Schumi, Toyota bets steal highlights of Formula 1 second leg

By Al S. Mendoza

ALF Schumacher (left) getting the traditional champagne splash from big brother Michael after Sunday's Malaysian Grand Prix of the Formula 1. AP FILE PHOTO

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THE SHOW of the Schumachers.

That, in a nutshell, was what happened in Sepang last weekend. There were other highlights but that's going ahead of the story.

Suffice it to say that the most sizzling story Sunday was more of Michael "Schumi" Schumacher finishing third than Ralf Schumacher winning the Malaysian Grand Prix.

Schumi climbed to third from 21st in a performance that defied imagination but defamed fascination.

He had been given up for lost after he lost the nose of his Ferrari after colliding with Juan Pablo Montoya, Ralf's teammate at BMW Williams.

He had been given up for a podium finish after he spent three trips to the pit.

Pole sitter

As a result of his brush with Montoya, the pole sitter for the 44th time in his illustrious career plummeted down to 21st among 22 starters.

But spectacularly, Schumi rebounded.

One by one, he passed all those in front of him like a bullet train speeding past bikers. By the last turn of the 56-lap race, he overtook Briton Jenson Button to take third place.

It was Schumi's second podium finish in as many legs, winning the Formula One season's inaugural in Melbourne on March 3 to keep the lead.

Schumi's 14 points gave him a 2-point margin over Montoya, the brash Colombian who scored his second straight runnerup finish. Ralf's victory handed him a third-running 10 points going to Sao Paolo, Brazil, on March 31.

Suspension problem

Never mind that Button, the promising 22-year-old Briton, suffered a suspension problem near the finish line that helped pave the way for Schumi's third place finish.

That was but incidental for, had the race been extended three more laps, perhaps Schumi might have also overtaken Montoya, who got the goat of Schumi after the Colombian declared: "I am the only threat to Michael Schumacher this year."

The animosity building between them flared all the more when Montoya called his "drive-through" penalty as "unfair." Schumi's answer to that: "He deserves the penalty."

The 26-year-old Montoya, who stunned the world when he was declared his country's Sportsman of the Year in 2001, was found by stewards guilty of having touched the nose of Schumi's red Ferrari at the first turn seconds after take-off.

As a result, Schumi's nose was clipped.

"He was lucky his engine didn't overheat," observed Motoring Today's Ray Butch Gamboa.

Montoya was fuming after the race.

Understeered

"I gave Schumacher room but he understeered a bit and touched me and that was it," said Montoya. "To me, it was a normal racing accident. I was a bit pissed off at that time as I thought he tried to knock me off. What is why I reacted (gestured angrily at him while passing Schumacher after the incident)."

He said the penalty was "very unfair."

Stewards forced Montoya to drive through the pit, reducing his speed to a pit-lane maximum of 80kph. That radically damaged his standing so that his runnerup finish was already considered a major feat.

"To be honest, I think I have seen far more extreme situations where nothing was done to the drivers," said Montoya in a pointed reference to the first-corner pile-up in Melborne where, as a result, eight cars were wiped out.

That pile-up saw Montoya's BMW Williams teammate Ralf Schumacher plough into the Ferrari of Rubens Barrichello.

"After that incident, everyone was saying the stewards should have done something but they did not," said Montoya. "I think after that incident they decided to take extreme measures and I had to take it."

Precious time

The collision in Sepang forced Schumi into the pit, costing him precious time. By the time he got back into the tracks, he was in 21st; he was last actually as one racer had quit. He became a solitary, if not a lonely sight as he tried to snake his way back into contention.

Amazingly, he succeeded somewhat. He did his overtaking almost with relative ease. Even as he made two more pit stops, Schumi displayed driving skills that put him a cut above the rest.

Of the 22 starters, only 13 survived.

Mercifully, Barrichello's engine caught fire and had to abandon the lead and onto retirement.

DHL Jordan Honda's Giancarlo Fisichella was hit from the back two laps into the race by his own teammate, rookie Takuma Sato. Although their cars absorbed damages, they went on to finish the race—Sato in 9th and Fisichella 13th.

Contenders Kimi Raikkonen of McLaren Mercedes (24 laps) and teammate David Coulthard (15) also retired on engine troubles.

But the hardest hit among the contenders was Toyota's Mika Salo, who was inside the Magic 6 when electronic problems struck. He lost his fifth place position following trips to the pit. His teammate, Allan McNish, battled furiously to get into sixth. But he lost a points-finish following a miscommunication with the crew, costing him 29 seconds or so at the pit. Reason: His tires due for replacement weren't ready when he got to the pit.

"That was a lesson that I will carry as I move on to the next leg in Brazil," said the Briton, who finished seventh. "But my confidence level has been jacked up tremendously with this finish."

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RP accepts offer to host Asian trackfest

THE PHILIPPINES has accepted the offer to host the third leg of the inaugural Asian track and field Grand Prix in May which will bring over the crème de la creme of Asian athletics in a bid to raise the stake of the country's preparation for the Busan Asian Games.

This was confirmed by Philippine Amateur Track and Field Association president Go Teng Kok yesterday after he closed the deal of the one-day, P1.2 million spectacle with Asian Amateur Athletics Association secretary general Maurice Nicholas.

Scheduled on May 26, Filipino tracksters – the most counted upon to bring glory to the country in the September Asiad – are set to gauge their strength against Asia's top six athletes in 15 events.

The Manila edition, to be held at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex, will be the third and final leg of the Grand Prix. The first two legs will be held in Hyderabad, India, on May 18 and Bangkok on May 21.

FVR marks a milestone

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

AT 74, former President Fidel V. Ramos is fit as a fiddle, the living proof of a true-blue sportsman. FVR is not only an accomplished, golfer, but a noted swimmer, runner, skydiver and scuba diver as well.

Born on March 18, 1928 in Lingayen, Pangasinan, FVR devoted his productive years in serving the country as a soldier and exemplary public servant, first as a young officer of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (he is an alumnus of West Point) who rose to become Philippine Constabulary chief, AFP Vice Chief of Staff, Chief of Staff, then Secretary of Defense and eventually, President of the Philippines. At present, he is serving as an ambassador of the country in important international conferences abroad and a valued partner of the Macapagal administration.

A former vice president of the Philippine Olympic Committee, FVR is liked and respected by POC officials whose loyalty and friendship he has cultivated through the years because of his faithful adherence to sportsmanship and fair play. Truly, FVR is our man for all seasons, a gentleman and an officer. *Mabuhay po kayo* sir and belated happy birthday!

***

LET THE COURT DECIDE. The long-running controversy over the ownership of the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex is debatable, said former POC president Julian Malonso, adding that legal luminary Leonard de Veyra stressed "Only the court could settle the matter." Then one of the best in Asia, the RMSC was built in line with the policy of the Philippine Amateur Athletic Federation, now defunct, to establish sports centers all over the country. For starters, the PAAF took over the functions of the Playground and Recreation Commission in 1920 to develop the vast area, including portions of Taft Avenue, Harrison Plaza and the Manila Zoo on Adriatico Street.

Firefly shines

CROWD favorite Firefly Thunderbird-8 of Ram Lopez and the powerhouse Firefly Group posted three straight wins yesterday to show the way in the NCA 7-Cock Derby four-clock finals tonight (Wednesday) at the Araneta Coliseum.

Two other entries also shared the lead, registering three points apiece in this derby hosted by Pampanga's Jingco brothers and Jet Fernando and the Bacolod Group. These were suprising Dada SL Gapan of Siegfrey Linsangan and Fantastic Kalvin of Alan Tan. Close behind with 2-1/2 points each were Thunderbird Firefly LG of Big Dome owner Nene Araneta and Pasay Uma of Cong. Montilla and Ramon Mansenares.

Tennis camp set

NATIONAL coach Johnny Jose and Marty Ilagan will hold a tennis camp from April 8-May 17 at the Ynares Socio-Cultural and Sports Center indoor courts in Pasig City.

A swimming program from basic and competitive level will also be held from April 1-June 7.

Interested parties may contact Jenny and Triccia (6347658, 6345410, 6335942) and Marites Eser (6330480).

Adamson spikers post 3-game sweep

HOPING to clinch a slot for the Boracay National Finals, Adamson University strung up a pair of emphatic wins recently to shine in the Metro Manila preliminary matches of the 6th Nestea Beach Volley University Championships at the La Salle Greenhills sand courts.

Hernani Lualhati and Sherwin Meneses turned back San Beda College's Jason Amparo and Nemesio Gavino, 21-14, before demolishing New Era University's Gerald de Chavez and Zoriel Gaffud, 21-7, later in the day, to complete a three-game sweep of Group D in the men's division.

Also vying for slots are unbeaten Letran College, PATTS, Far Eastern University, University of the East and University of Santo Tomas in the men's division and Mapua, Letran, St. Jude College, University of the East, Philippine Christian University, Adamson, Fatima College and National University in the women's side.

Riding the crest of a 21-8 triumph over Fatima, UST resumes its quest on April 5 and 6 as it leads several other men's campaigners in Groups E, F, G and H with the top 16 teams from each division barging into the next phase scheduled the following day.

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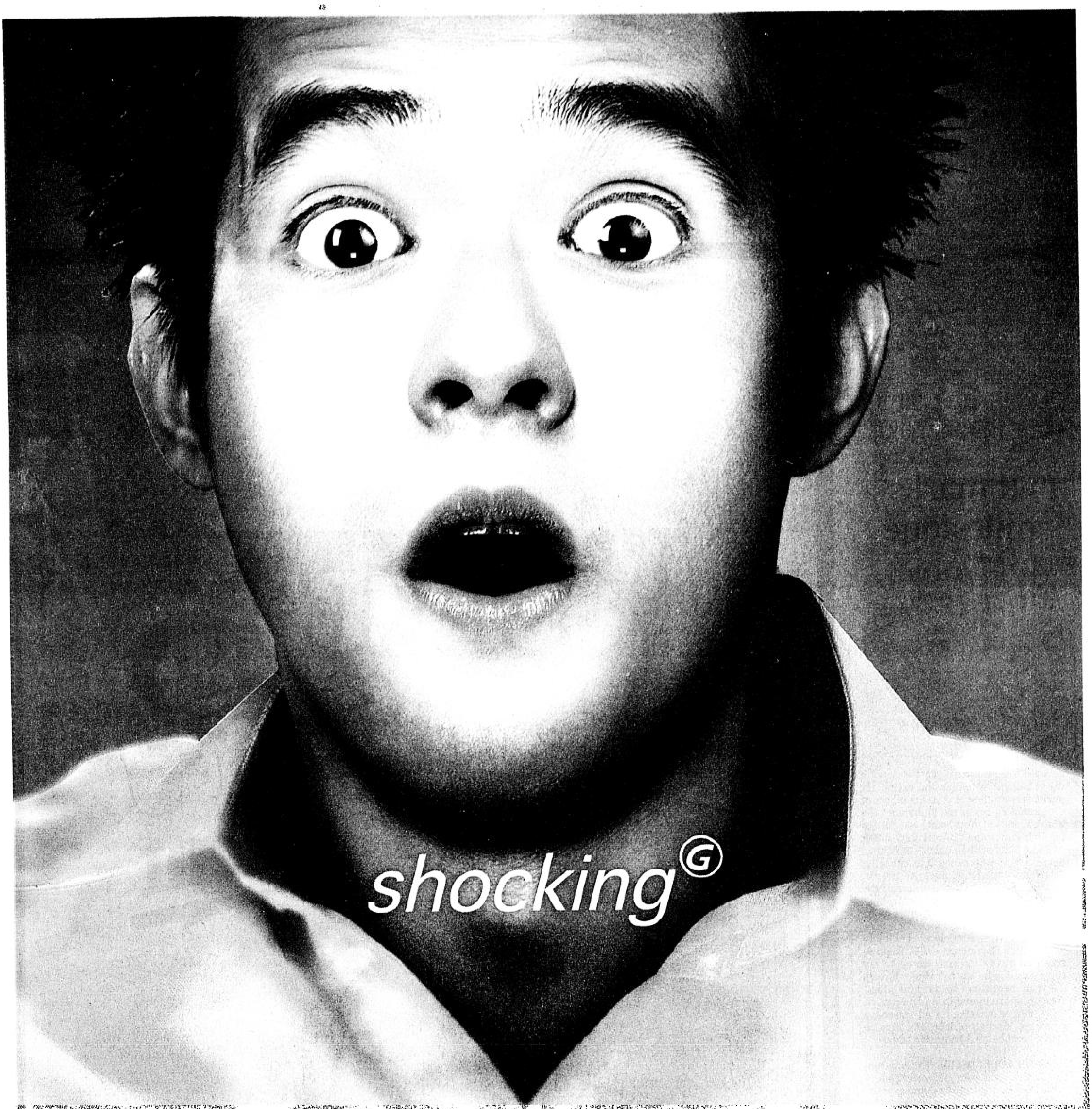

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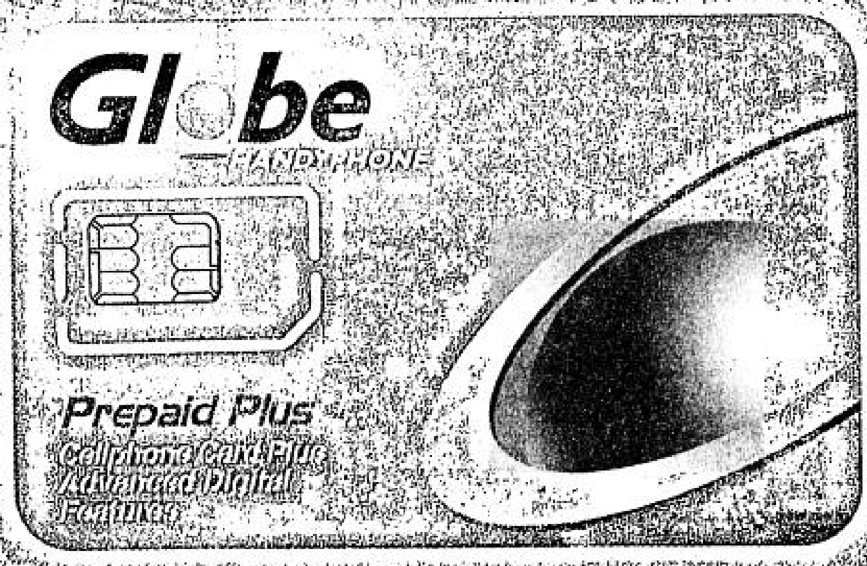
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METRO

Editor **Louie C. Camino**

Bare Eye: Ciso Bernardo coming home from nowhere on Holy Week /A26

Aiko Melendez files petition for annulment of marriage to Jomari Yllana

By Agnes E. Donato

MELENDEZ

YLLANA

HE HAD extramarital affairs, he hurt her physically, refused to "engage in intimate relations" with her and did not financially support their son, actress Aiko Melendez alleged of her actor husband Jomari Yllana when she filed a petition for the annulment of their marriage.

Melendez, who is also a Quezon City councilor, cited Yllana's alleged disloyalty and psychological incapacity as the reasons for her petition.

In her petition, Melendez said Yllana engaged in several extramarital affairs during their three years of marriage.

Melendez and Yllana, who have a 3-year-old son, have been separated since early last year, but they did not admit it publicly until after Melendez won a seat in the Quezon City council in the May 2001 local elections.

Melendez recounted how she once saw Yllana with a former girlfriend, who was not from show biz, in Ortigas, Pasig City when he was supposedly attending a birthday party.

When confronted, Yllana denied being with the other woman and started cursing his wife instead, Melendez said.

She said Yllana also hurt her during the fight and calmed down only when he saw blood oozing from her forehead.

She said her husband is a very quiet person but could be violent during his outbursts.

"(Melendez) had several times incurred injuries by reason of the physical violence inflicted on her by (Yllana)," the petition said. "(She) however was constrained to seek medical attention to avoid publicity, sensing that it would affect their status as public figures."

Melendez said her husband would always "apologize and promise that he would stop his philandering ways." But his behavior only got worse, she said.

She said he acted like he was still single, staying away from home for long periods without leaving word about his whereabouts. This and his "refusal to engage relations" prompted her to seek the advice of married friends, Melendez said.

She said she was able to confirm Yllana's rumored relationship with another actress.

"In addition, (Yllana) failed to give his only son the proper support, love and affection since their separation and left the financial support entirely to (Melendez)," the petition said.

Melendez also said Yllana was the jealous type. She said he once got into a fistfight with her former boyfriend when Yllana bumped into him in a disco in Makati City.

Melendez, a former girlfriend of Yllana's brother Anjo, had a whirlwind romance with Yllana shortly after they started filming a movie in Palawan in 1995. She gave birth to their only son on Sept. 7, 1998 and she married Yllana in a civil ceremony on Dec. 15 the same year.

2 bombs planted in Ayala, Buendia

TWO BOMBS were found planted in Makati City late Monday night but police safely defused them.

In letters found with the bombs, a group calling itself the "Indigenous Federal State Army" claimed responsibility for the attempted bombings, Director Edgardo Aglipay, chief of the Philippine National Police in the National Capital Region, said.

The group claimed to be seeking the country's division into separate states of Muslim, Christian and indigenous groups, according to the letter writer who identified himself as "Adrev."

Makati police said two security guards found the bombs on the side

2 BOMBS PLANTED/ A26

Dads to sue mayor over 'secret dump' contract extension

By Christian V. Esguerra
and Alcuin Papa

MEMBERS of the minority bloc of the Taguig municipal council said they are set to file charges against Taguig Mayor Sigfrido Tinga and the majority councilors for extending the contract of IPM Construction and Development Corp. to collect and dispose of Taguig's garbage until June.

Councilor Noel Dizon, assistant minority floor leader, said IPM supposedly operates a "secret dumpsite" near Laguna Lake.

But Ana Santos, Taguig public information officer, said Tinga had nothing to do with the contract "since the mayor's office is independent of the council."

The Metro Manila Development Authority and the Taguig government are investigating IPM following reports that it has been operating an illegal dumpsite in Sitio Arienda in Taytay, Rizal.

"It's really mysterious," Dizon told the Inquirer on Monday. "At the very least, Tinga should have asked the majority to wait for the results of the investigations."

Councilor Marisse Balina Eron, majority floor leader, said the minority should instead go after the Pre-qualification, Bids, and Awards Committee (PBAC).

"Obviously, he (Dizon) doesn't know the procedures," Eron said in a telephone interview. "The council merely confirmed the contract extension."

She said IPM won the bid to

DADS TO SUE/ A26

'Pathetic'

By Christian V. Esguerra

MAYOR Joey Marquez of Parañaque yesterday said his archrival's plan to invite his estranged wife Alma Moreno to be his running mate in 2004 was "pathetic and unethical."

"It's unfortunate that he's exploiting my problem with my wife," Marquez said of former Parañaque mayor Pablo Olivarez, who admitted Monday that he would try to convince Moreno to run for vice mayor under his ticket.

Marquez said it was "highly unethical" of Olivarez to "start politicking this early" and even try to woo Moreno to his camp.

Olivarez, who was mayor from 1992 to 1995, said on Monday that Moreno could be

PATHETIC/ A26

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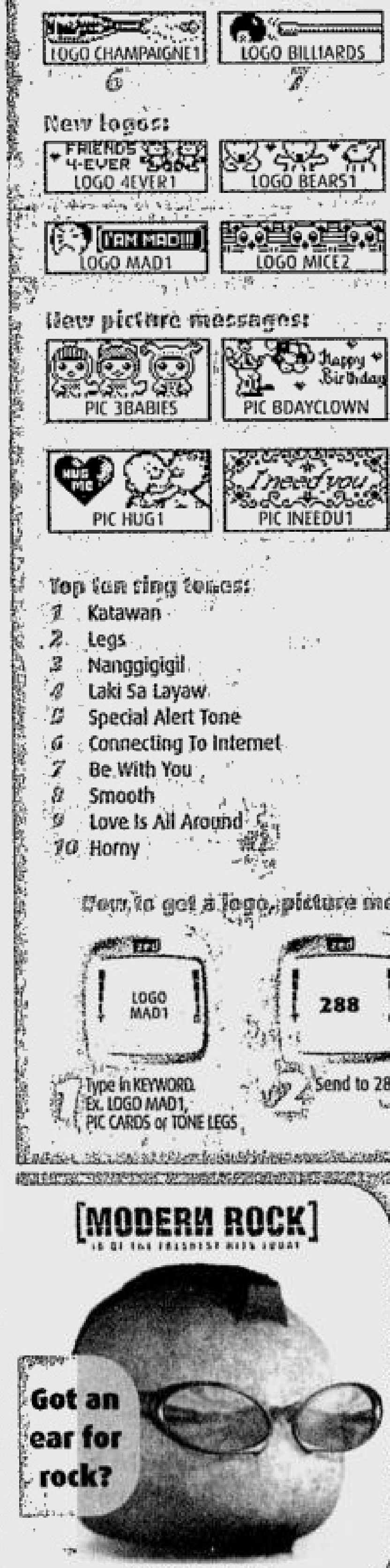

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CALTEX What Drives You

Ciso Bernardo coming home from nowhere on Holy Week

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

THE SON of Olympian Narciso Bernardo says his father will be home for Holy Week.

Nothing unusual there, except that Bernardo has not come home for nearly three months now.

The sports hero, a favorite son of Mandaluyong, had taken an unscheduled trip to nowhere.

He left home one afternoon middle of last January, took a post-holiday jog around the track oval at the Ultra in Pasig, and passed out.

Bernardo was rushed to the Medical City where he landed in the intensive care unit.

Doctors discovered he had suffered a massive stroke.

Prior to the incident, Bernardo had suffered from dizzy spells. His blood pressure was found to be a little below normal. Further checks, however, showed there was nothing seriously wrong with his system.

Naturally, the person most horrified by what had befallen Bernardo was his wife Rosa, a registered nurse.

***

There followed a long, tense, tearful vigil.

Visitors were not allowed. But friends who managed to take a peek at the fallen Olympian would leave shaking their heads.

There were fears he was hovering between life and death.

His numberless friends were left with nothing to do but pray.

But next came welcome news. After over a month at the Medical City, Bernardo was taken out of the ICU and taken to the Polymedic Center on Edsa, now closer to the Bernardo residence on San Rafael Street off Boni Avenue.

Finally out of the ICU but the overall prognosis remained bleak.

Bernardo, despite the reported progress, was still comatose.

The best that family members could report was the faint reaction he would issue after hard, painful pinching.

***

They prayed, hoped, and prayed.

The good news came yesterday. Bernardo's son Noel, a barangay chieftain in Plainview, explained everything over the phone.

There was music in his voice when he announced that his father would be discharged from Polymedic in time for Holy Week.

They plan a homecoming on Palm Sunday.

Noel also reported that, for the first time, his father failed to attend the barrio fiesta of his native Namayan in Mandaluyong yesterday.

All his life — Bernardo turns 65 in July — the great athlete had been present to celebrate the Feast of St. Joseph, patron of his once rustic birthplace by the Pasig.

Noel says his father would also miss another lifetime vow. Bernardo would not be there to join the Santo Entierro procession in Mandaluyong on March 29.

Just like the fiesta in the barrio which Ciso Bernardo roamed as a hungry, barefoot kid selling ice-drop, joining the Good Friday procession was a lifetime devotion of the four-time Olympian.

***

Now you must be wondering why I have been manifesting this unusual concern.

Simple. Ciso is my *kumpadre*, a baptismal *ninong* of my second son, Paolo Martin.

But more than this, Bernardo is an original idol of my struggling boyhood.

He was a mainstay with the National U Bulldogs. But before making it to the UAAP, he starred for the Northern & Harrison (Jackbilt Blocks) squad in a minor Manila commercial league.

Of course, they took him in only after his sensational stint with his team Namayan, perennial rival of Hulo, in the Mandaluyong inter-barrio circuit.

It's said that Bernardo, a shoeless team alternate, was discovered by his uncle Esto Castañeda after they ran out of players in a big game in Makati. Made to put on the soggy shoes of a fouled-out teammate, Bernardo promptly led Namayan to victory.

***

Dark of skin, bony of face, the lean Bernardo was a sharp, tireless workhorse.

He chose to wear jersey No. 8 because the number corresponded with the black ball on the billiards table.

He was to join great teammates like Big Boy Reynoso, Joaquin Rojas, Manny Jocson and Ed Roque at Ysmael Steel, whose epic rivalry with mighty Yco Paints became a long-running main event at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum from the late '50s to way past the mid-'60s.

He was rookie of the year in the inaugural tournament of the Asian Basketball Confederation which was won by the Philippines in Manila in 1960. After Rome in 1961, he was to make it to three more national Olympic basketball teams in 1964, 1968 and 1972.

On those long, trying stints abroad, Ciso Bernardo always returned home with exciting tales to tell.

***

There will be no such stories when he returns from his latest trip.

With a drain tube inserted in his throat, Ciso is unable to speak.

In fact, his son says his father could communicate using only hand signals.

He has, however, amazed doctors, who had feared Ciso could fumble and lose this grimmest one-on-one of his life.

Our man has been undergoing therapy. He's being made to work his legs on special pedals.

The doctors describe his recovery as fantastic.

They just could not fathom where he was able to draw all the resources.

Yes, it took him months before he finally found his way back into the game.

If it were a regular match, Bernardo would have run out of time.

But our bet is that he'll be able to beat the buzzer and score the greatest basket of his colorful life.

Our player has got the unshakeable poor-man's guts.

2 bombs planted in Ayala, Buendia

From page A25

walks of Ayala and Buendia avenues late Monday and called up police.

Makati police chief Supt. Alex Gutierrez said the bombs could not have exploded because they did not have blasting caps.

One bomb was made of a 2.4-inch mortar shell and the other was made of a 1.6-inch grenade round.

Makati police said the first bomb was found at 11:05 p.m. on the traffic island in the middle of Ayala Avenue in front of the Prudential Bank.

Security guard Tony Misobre told police he saw a man alight from a taxi and place an envelope on the traffic island. The guard said he became suspicious and called Makati police.

The second bomb was found near the Commonwealth Foods building at the corner of Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue (formerly Buendia) and Don Chino Roces Avenue (formerly Pasong Tamo).

Security guard Dionisio Ogno, who found the bomb, told police he was patrolling the area when he found a brown envelope, which had the address of the Senate and the House of Representatives written on it.

Ogno said he peered inside the envelope and saw the explosive device. He also called Makati police.

Aglipay cast doubt over the claim of the "Indigenous Federal State Army," saying shadowy opposition groups in the past had attempted bombings to destabilize the government every time the country appeared to be on the road to recovery.

He also said he would not rule out the possibility that Muslim separatist guerrillas or communist rebels might be behind the latest bombing attempt.

"The 60 mm (mortar) and the (grenade) can be found in many places," he said in a TV interview. "Any group can get them so we are not discounting that it could be other groups who would like to destabilize the present government."

Aglipay said the explosives were not destroyed and expressed hope that they could be used to pin down the suspects.

Muslim extremists have staged bombing attacks in the south as US and Philippine forces participated in joint operations against local allies of the al-Qaida network of suspected terror mastermind Osama bin Laden.

Supporters of former President Joseph Estrada, deposed in a popular uprising amid a corruption scandal in January 2001 are also suspected of spreading bomb rumors in Manila in an attempt to undermine his successor, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

In January, Philippine police arrested Indonesian Fathur Rohman al-Ghozi on suspicion that he was an explosives expert for the Jemaah Islamiyah extremist group, an al-Qaida ally said to be planning a bombing campaign against US targets in Singapore. ***AFP, Reuters, Alcuin Papa***

8 cops charged with robbery

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE WESTERN Police District (WPD) filed charges of robbery and violation of domicile against eight policemen from Quezon City for allegedly robbing an eatery owner and a customer of more than P70,000 in Quiapo, Manila.

The alleged robbery happened while the eight Central Police District (CPD) agents were raiding the eatery, during which they arrested two persons for alleged possession of 30 sachets of shabu, investigators said.

The WPD General Assignment Section filed the charges against Insp. Francisco Sumpo, SPO2 Dante Naguera, SPO1 Francisco Gimpes, PO3 Dominador Fernandez, PO3 Lucio Husmalaga, PO3 Joel Sanbaez, PO3 Menardo Tagudar, and PO1 Estelito Mortega, all of the CPD district drug enforcement group.

They are accused of robbing Monisah Gundaka Casan, 48, of Quiapo, and Ensi S. Kudarat, of Maharlika Village, Taguig, of P72,000 during the raid on Casan's cafeteria on Elizondo Street on Monday.

Casan said the policemen took her bag containing P100,000 during the raid. When they gave it back, only P47,000 was left in the bag, she said.

Kudarat said the policemen took P15,000 from him.

But Supt. Danilo Abarsoza, head of the Sta. Cruz police station, said the missing money might have been part of the evidence confiscated during the operation.

"(The filing of a complaint) is their prerogative," Abarsoza said. "It's up to them to prove that a robbery happened."

He said the CPD men coordinated with the WPD when they conducted the raid around 4 p.m. Monday.

He said the raid resulted in the arrest of Tuday Gampon, 29, of Maharlika Village, and Tabib Dimalanan, 21, of Quiapo.

The policemen alleged they confiscated 30 plastic sachets from the two men but a third suspect, a woman, escaped.

Abarsoza said an angry mob surrounded the cafeteria and nearly lynched the seven CPD lawmen.

"(The policemen) could not get out," he said. "So my men went there and pacified the people who surrounded the cafeteria."

The PSE deserves better

The camp of Mr. Robert Coyiuto Jr. that participated and lost in the March 9 elections of the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) wants the results of the election annulled.

That election chose Ms. Vivian Yuchengco, an outstanding industry leader, as new chairperson of the PSE. She was elected by a group of eight non-brokers. Ms. Yuchengco represents 'new blood' and new hope in the securities market. Her election is a fulfillment of the PSE mandate on transparency and broadened representation.

The Coyiuto camp, however, refused to concede their loss. They claimed they had the 'numbers' on March 9 and that they had the 'mandate' of the stockholders. In a full-page advertisement, they complained that the non-broker candidates failed to inform the Coyiuto and Yuchengco Groups "their preference and intent to exercise their right to vote freely in electing the Chairman," which "would have been the most decent thing to do."

AN OPEN AND DEMOCRATIC ELECTION

The elections however were held in an open and democratic manner. The non-broker group did not spring any surprise during the entire proceedings. Voting was strictly in accord with the Securities Regulations Code and the bylaws of the Philippine Stock Exchange.

It was to prevent another BW-type scam that Congress enacted a new Securities Regulations Code to transform the exchange from a membership club into a publicly owned stock corporation, including eight non-brokers in the 15-man board.

Under the PSE bylaws, the chairman would be elected by majority vote of the 15-person board of broker and non-broker members. It is a function of the board, and not of the stockholders, to elect a chairman.

PROTECTING THE MINORITY

Father Joaquin G. Bernas, S.J., a non-broker member of the PSE, wrote: "The agency of the board … is highly fiduciary. As one Supreme Court decision put it ' ... the board of directors or majority thereof, in drawing to themselves the powers of the corporation, occupies a position of trusteeship in relation to the minority of the stock ... and should protect not only the affairs of the majority but also those of the minority of the stock.'"

In the full-page ad, the Coyiuto group expressed the hope that the non-broker directors would reconsider their action, saying they leave it up to the non-broker directors "to take such action as may be warranted under the circumstances."

What the circumstances dictate is to honor the results of the election, allow the new chairperson and board to exercise vigorous leadership and the vanquished group to extend its wholehearted support.

A NEW AND MORE RESPONSIVE PSE

A becoming concession from the Coyiuto Group would help end discredited practices at the PSE, dismantle the self-serving 'old boys' network' and promote the good of the securities market and the national interest over private interests.

The world still remembers the BW Resources scam that made overnight millionaires of privileged persons and that victimized hundreds of investors. Scams have no place in the demutualized PSE.

The BW scam was made possible by the "old boys' network" of brokers who connived with each other to bend trading rules to rig the price of shares and to fatten the wallets of friends and associates. The network must be disbanded.

It is time that the operations of the PSE be made transparent and be more responsive to the needs of the market in general and investors in particular. It is time to restore the integrity of the stock market. Public confidence in the exchange must again be established. Chairperson Yuchengco can bring about these changes.

Let us hurry on the advent of a new and a more purposeful PSE. For the good of the industry. For the country. For the people.

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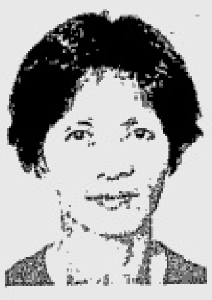

BUENCONSEJO

WILMA L. Buenconsejo, 37, has been missing for two months now, according to her family.

Buenconsejo was believed to have last worked in a firm in San Juan, Metro Manila. She is a native of Capiz and is married to Miguel Bello Buenconsejo. They have five children.

Her family welcomes any information regarding her whereabouts. Please call 932-3609 or 430-0282, or write Miguel Buenconsejo at Lot 4, Block 24, Doña Isidora Street, Holy Spirit, Quezon City.

Dads to sue . . .

From page A25

manage Taguig's garbage conducted by the PBAC.

In a letter to MMDA chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. dated March 15, Tinga said the supposed dumpsite is located in a disputed 114-hectare property in Barangay Pinagbuhatan in Pasig. Taguig, Pasig and Rizal have staked claims on the property, Tinga said.

Residents of Pinagbuhatan and Napindan in Taguig, which is located across the dumpsite, complained of foul odor coming from the area, Tinga said.

The Taguig health office is now conducting "fogging, fumigation, water treatment/disinfection and other related sanitation activities in Barangay Napindan," he said.

The Ecological Solid Waste Management act prohibits the use of open dumpsites, according to Metodio Palaypay, president of the Zero Waste Recycling Movement of the Philippines.

"Only dumb mayors have a dumpsite," Palaypay said.

Unless they solve the garbage problems in their respective areas, the mayors could be charged administratively under the same law, he said.

He called on the government to push for the full implementation of the law's Implementing Rules and Regulations released last Jan. 6.

Republic Act No. 9003 provides that the "no segregation, no collection" scheme should be implemented. Drivers and operators of dump trucks found violating the law will be fined half a million pesos.

He said individuals could file a class suit called the Suits and Strategic Action Against Public Participation (SLAPP) against their mayor for not enforcing the law.

If found violating the law, the mayor could be removed for cause or suspended, he said.

'Pathetic'

From page A25

his "lucky charm" in his bid to regain his post.

"He (Olivarez) should remember that it's not his running mate who would vote for him and ensure his victory," Marquez said. "He needs to prove himself to the people. So good luck to him."

Olivarez was a fierce critic of Moreno at the height of his political rivalry with Marquez. He emerged again after Marquez and Moreno announced last January the break-up of their 12-year marriage.

He attended the wake of Moreno's mother last month and watched the actress' show in a bar in Malate last week, bolstering speculation that he was planning to ask Moreno to be his running mate.

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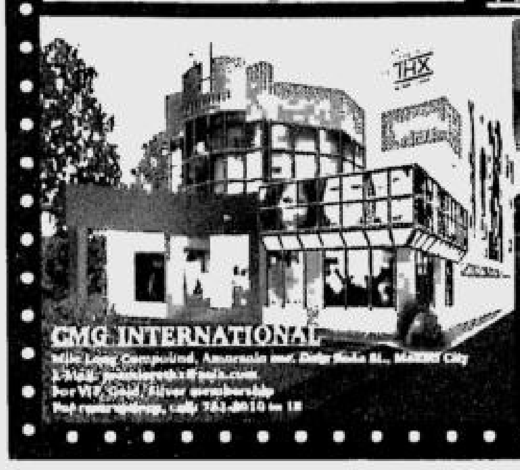

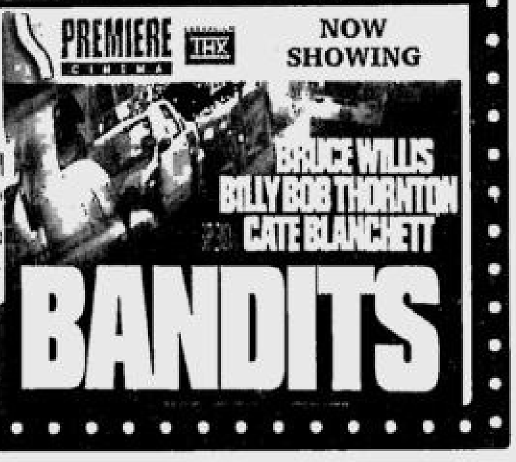

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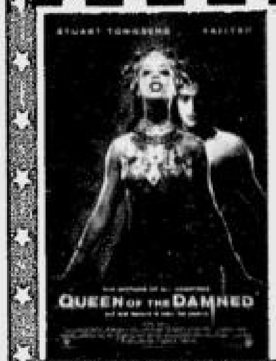

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CINEMA-7	EVA
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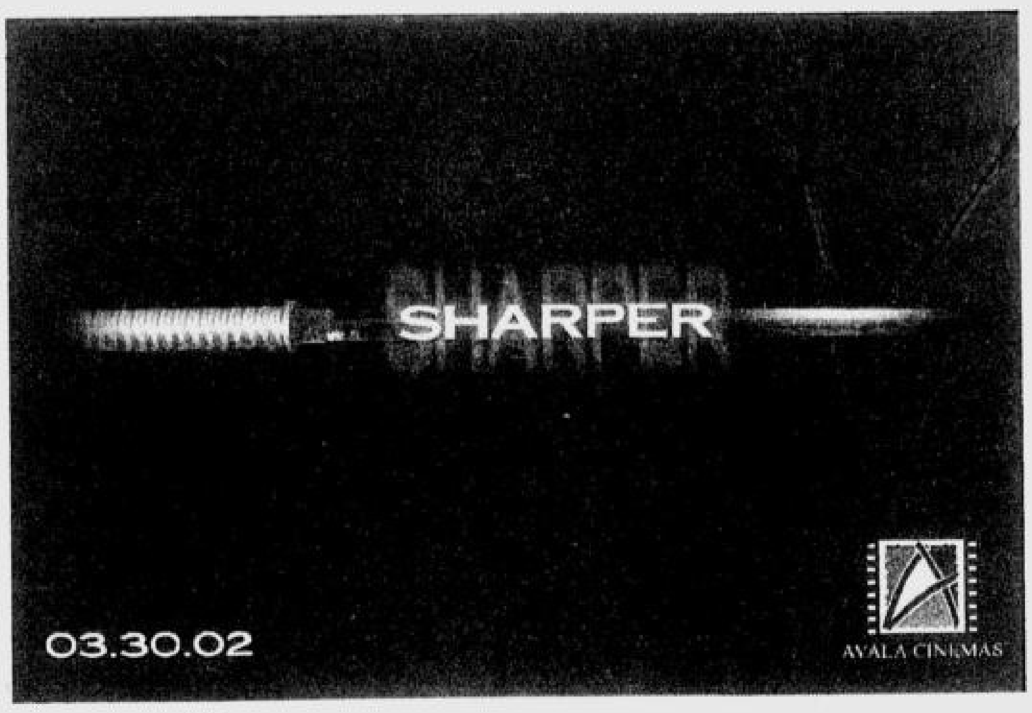
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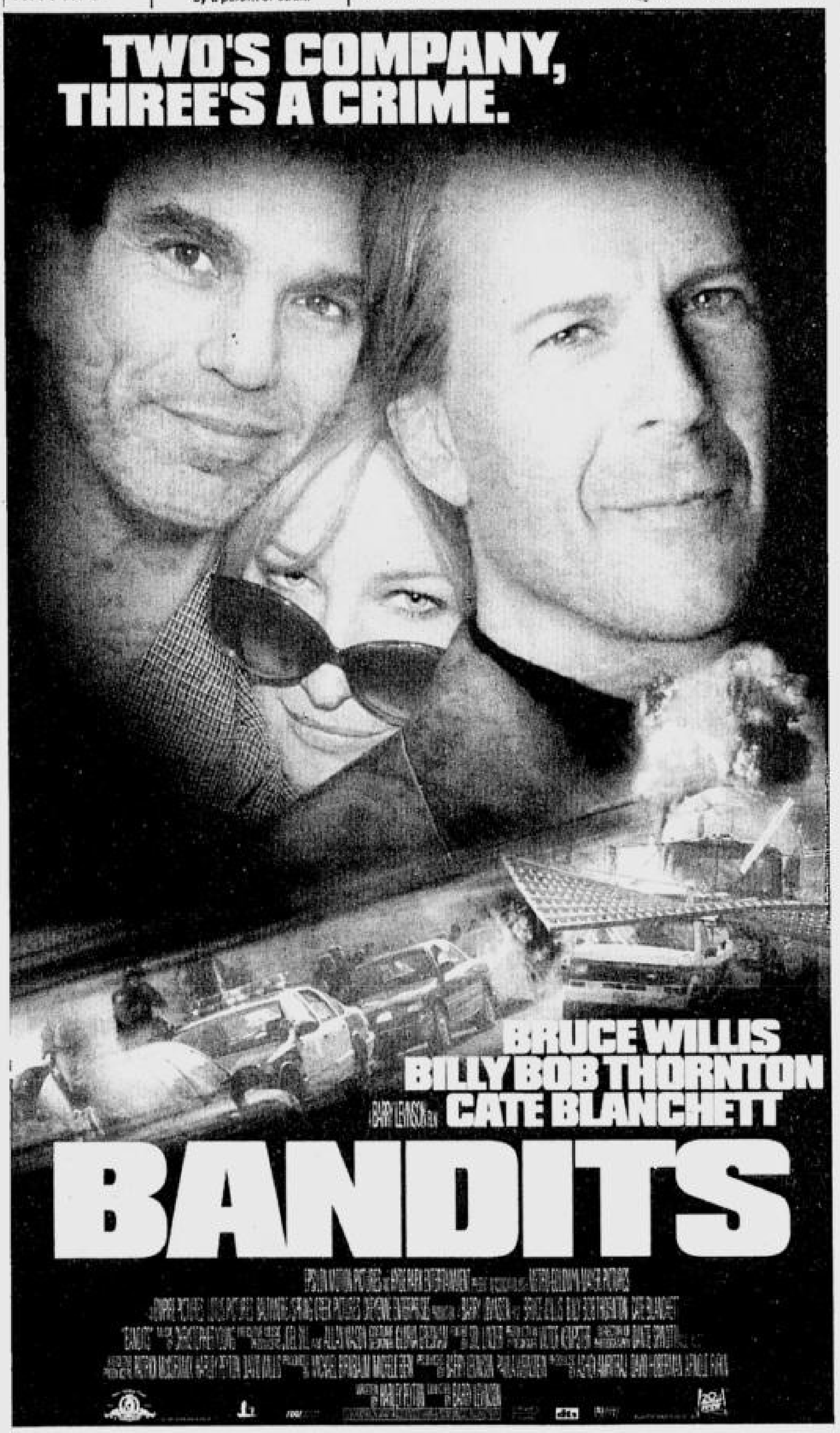
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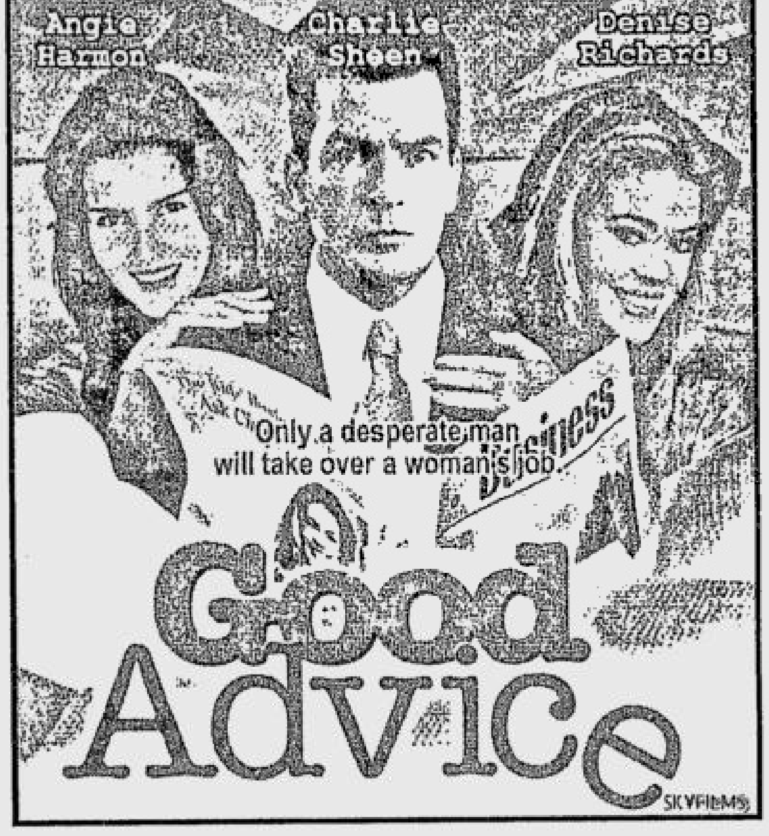
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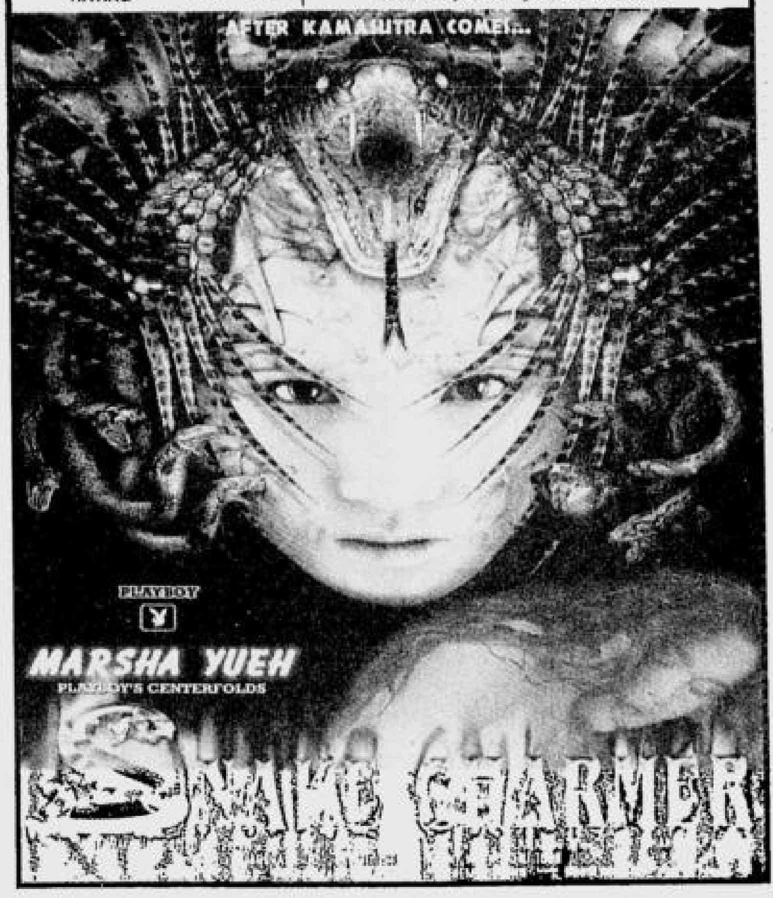
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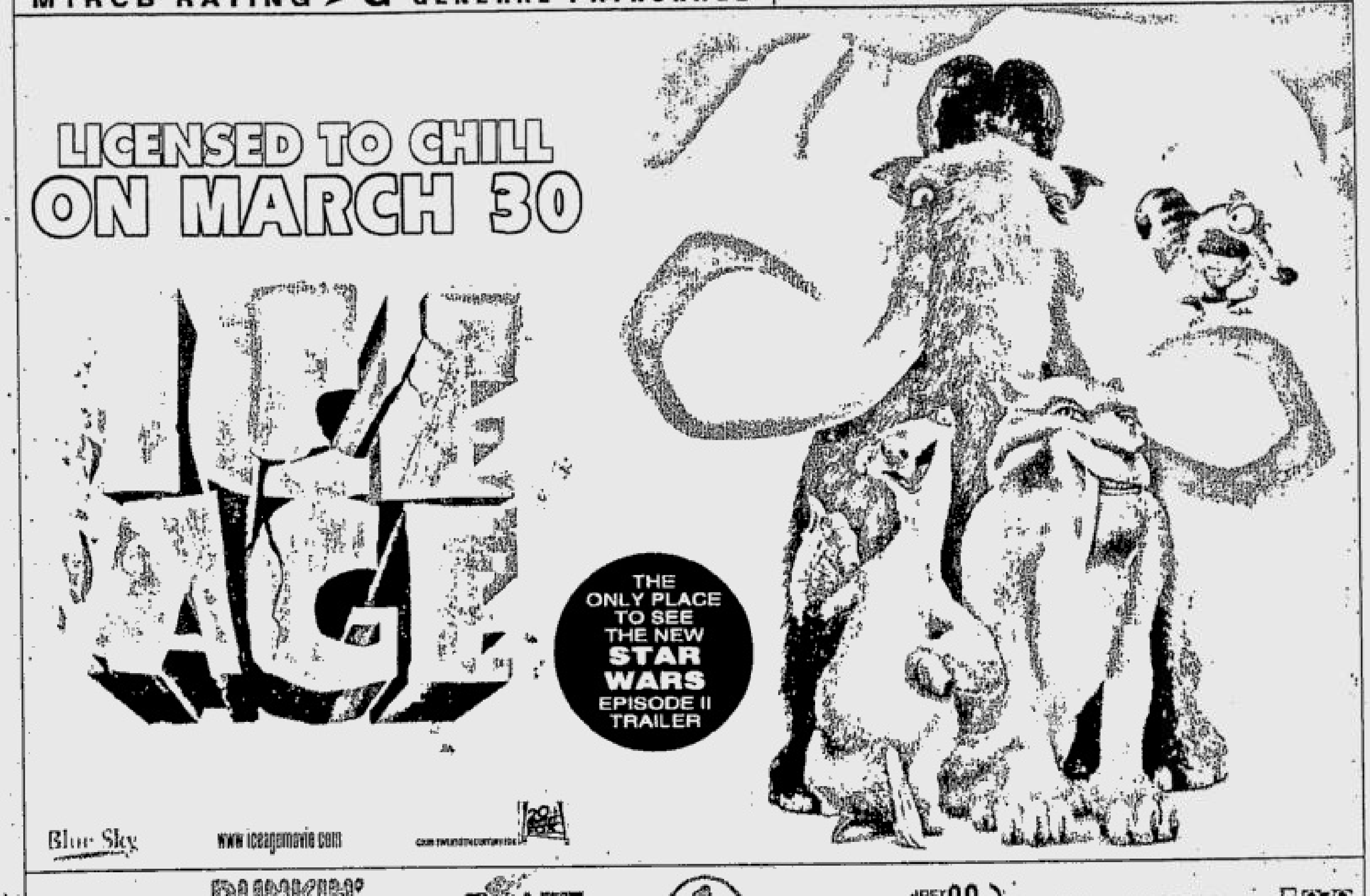
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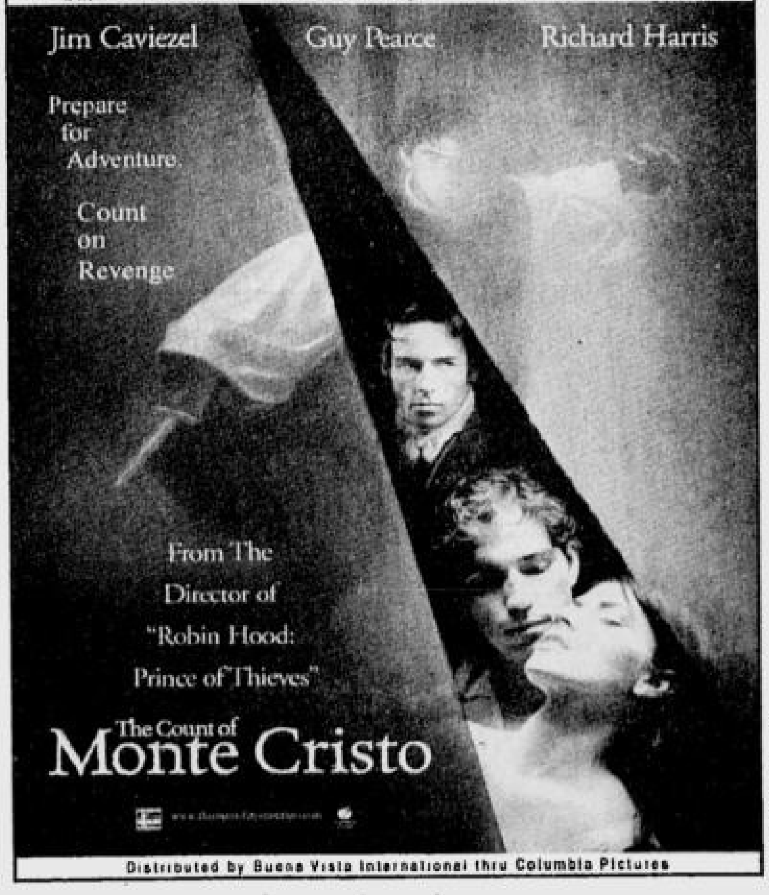
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'THE SHIPPING NEWS'

An exposition on the fragile bonds of home

By Emmie G. Velarde

REVIEW

NEITHER one of two vivid images that I retain from "The Shipping News" has lead actor Kevin Spacey in it, though he is in practically every scene, and he was the reason I turned away from Ben Stiller, Mel Gibson and Gene Hackman starrers in the same movie week.

The first image is a proud Kodak moment: People in funeral black drag a whole log house through blustery weather across a landscape of pure white snow. This might recall the *bayanihan* for Philippine audiences—if only the people were not in black to start with, or if only they smiled just the tiniest bit.

All chill and grim determination, this moment in the movie is, nevertheless, the cover image of the Pulitzer prize-winning novel that it is based on. The filmmakers insisted on this scene despite balking producers because, they said, it effectively set the stage for their exposition on "the fragile yet tenacious bonds of home."

In the second image, the illustrious Dame Judi Dench looks out through the window of an outhouse. She is the picture of satisfaction over revenge accomplished and it's striking, because what she's doing inside, is urinating on her brother's ashes, which she has just poured into the hole.

Cold and empty

If "The Shipping News" does not get an extended run, it's partly because it gets too cold in an empty theater, with generous helpings of winter landscapes. Also, the movie has more pause-for-thought moments than the ordinary spectator may be willing to sit through. Winding it is. . . and wet.

Occasional flare-ups (of passion, et cetera) are immediately doused by intermittent reminders of where the story is happening—over two feet of frost. Plus, water is the active content of all pertinent flashback scenes: Quoyle (Spacey) being taught to swim by his father and all but drowning, his runaway wife's car falling into a river, his wild ancestors tricking ships to run aground.

Ah, but it starts so well. Quoyle, an exceedingly passive man, is an ink setter for a newspaper with a funny name, in upstate New York. He is seduced by a mad woman, Petal (Cate Blanchett), and it is love at first climax; he marries her.

As a spouse, she treats him pretty much like the seat of her micro mini, or the soles of her high-heeled boots. Still, he's nothing less than obsessed with her.

"If you don't understand why," Blanchett has been quoted as saying, "you won't understand him. Petal is bad seed. That's why I wanted to do it."

Life gets progressively worse for Quoyle. His father calls from out of town, to announce that he and his wife are about to commit suicide. Quoyle the dutiful son goes off to cremate his parents and, coming home with their remains, he finds that his wife has left him, but not before selling their young daughter to another couple.

Hypnotic effect

This character Petal is so bristly and malevolent her effect is hypnotic. When she dies early on and Quoyle withdraws further than before into himself, the movie is considerably hushed. From this point, Director Lasse Hallstrom seems to say, excitement is not allowed to go beyond one octave. This is not to say the rest of the movie will stop aspiring for "romantic" or "touching." As such, former Hallstrom works "The Cider House Rules" and "Chocolat" are remembered.

But the story continues. Quoyle relocates to his ancestral hometown with his daughter (returned by the police) and an unknown relative that just suddenly shows up. Aunt Agnis (Dench) hauls off father and child to a stark new life in a creaky wooden house on a deserted hilltop, fastened to the rocky ground by cables that weep in the wind.

He finds work in the local tabloid and is forced by circumstance to be a reporter, even while protesting that he cannot write. And guess what? He becomes the star of the motley crew.

KEVIN SPACEY and Juliane Moore

At this point I get suspicious. Quoyle starts to look and act more and more like magazine journalist Lester Burnham of "American Beauty." I carry this chip till the end, convinced that Lester staged his own death so he could trace his roots and rewrite his life. He does look too thoughtful for his first job in the latter movie as ink setter. Did Hallstrom unwittingly make the prequel-sequel to the Oscar Year 2000 Winner for Best Film?

Misery's middle

In Newfoundland, Quoyle/Lester finds a new love (Julianne Moore), old relations, and the proverbial skeletons in the closet. Measured against the current news of the world, these skeletons—incest, pirate-hood, among others—are soap operatic. This hews closely to Hallstrom's experience in Newfoundland, vis-à-vis

AN EXPOSITION/ A30

Onemig hurt by criticism

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salterio

JUST when he is starting to take his career more seriously and to tackle challenging roles, **Onemig Bondoc** is being barraged with criticisms for his acting.

Onemig is disappointed because he has been working hard to improve his acting, "I'm 24," he allows. "I've been in the business for six years now. During my teenage years, I was complacent about my career. But now, I want to play more mature roles and prove that I am really an actor. Why don't they give me a chance? I hope they see my effort and appreciate what I do."

Onemig, who has been typecast to boy-next-door roles, vows to do more mature characterizations in his future projects.

Late last year, he was given a chance to show his acting knowhow in an episode of the TV crime-drama series, "Kasangga," hosted by **Rudy Fernandez** on GMA 7. He played the true-to-life role of a demented guy and was directed by **Maryo J. de los Reyes**.

Onemig worked with another hot-shot director, **Joel Lamangan**, when he played a macho dancer in an episode of ABS-CBN's legal drama, "Your Honor."

"A few years back, I wouldn't have said yes to those kinds of roles," he says. "But now, I want to challenge myself and explore my acting ability. I want to be versatile and I've been working at it."

Onemig is also smarting from the negative write-ups he received after the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) and the National Youth Commission (NYC) appointed him their official youth spokesperson to inspire young people to contribute to nation-building.

"There were people who were saying I was not the right choice," says Onemig, who replaced **Rico Yan**. "That's very disheartening. I just want to help the youth. I'm not perfect. Nobody is."

He admits he was in fact surprised after being told that he was chosen as spokesperson for the youth.

"I was not really a top student," he says. "I even flunked when I was in high school. I was a repeater. But they explained to me that not all students are straight. They said the important thing is that I'm trying to finish my studies."

HER mother's daughter, Danica Sotto proves she can live outside the shadow of mom Dina Bonnevie.

Onemig is now enrolled in the CAP college home study course. He is a freshman in business management.

According to NYC chair **Mabel Villarica-Mamba**, Onemig was chosen from a list of nominees from show biz and other personalities in sports and broadcasting. He came out as the unanimous choice of the screening committee, composed of representatives of youth agencies and NGOs.

His new role as spokesperson for the youth has taken Onemig to public schools in Cagayan de Oro and Quezon provinces where students gave him a warm welcome. He will visit more schools around the country in the coming months.

"I even suggested to NYC that we initiate activities for the youth, like cleaning the environment, sports and anti-drug campaigns so they will be busy," Onemig says. "I really want to help the youth."

He was recently accorded the Parangal ng Bayan's Huwarang Kabataan award for being an effective spokesperson and entertainer.

Onemig is optimistic this year will be more fruitful for him. He had an auspicious start with his being chosen as NYC spokesperson. He also went to the United States last month to tape a *telesine*, "Amboy."

Four films projects have been offered to him, including a period film directed by **Lamangan**.

"I can't be seen smoking or drinking," he says of his role as youth spokesperson. "I'll be more conscious about the role I will portray. I can do heavy drama, but not bold. I don't want to disappoint anyone. I don't want to fail the people who trust me."

Her own person

IT'S EASY to get into show biz if you're the daughter of comedian/TV host **Vic Sotto** and award-winning actress **Dina Bonnevie**.

But for **Danica Sotto**, it is hard. Although her show biz lineage is a big advantage, Danica admits she has had to prove she is worthy of being the daughter of Vic and Dina, but she also has to go beyond that tag by proving her own talent.

She swears it wasn't easy to ignore the lure of show biz when she was younger and to say no to persistent show biz insiders.

"Every time I refused, something new always came along," Danica shares. "I remember that in one month, I turned down five to seven offers. I turned down 'Click' before, when I was supposed to be one of the good characters. After a year, they offered it to me again, but this time they gave me the *contravida* role."

After much thought and with the blessing of both her dad and mom, Danica said yes to a villain role on TV.

"I realized playing a *contravida* is more challenging," Danica says. "It was scary at first, but eventually, I got good feedback from viewers."

Danica has the comic flair of her dad whom she joins on the GMA fantasy sitcom, "Daddy Di Do Doo." She also displays the acting prowess she inherited from her mom, as she plays the resident *contravida* in the teen anthology, "Click," also on GMA.

Very soon, she will be seen on the big screen, too. She recently signed up a four-year, three-movies-a-year contract with Viva Films.

Danica says she dreams of doing something like **Angelina Jolie**'s Oscar-winning role in "Girl, Interrupted," where the latter played a schizophrenic.

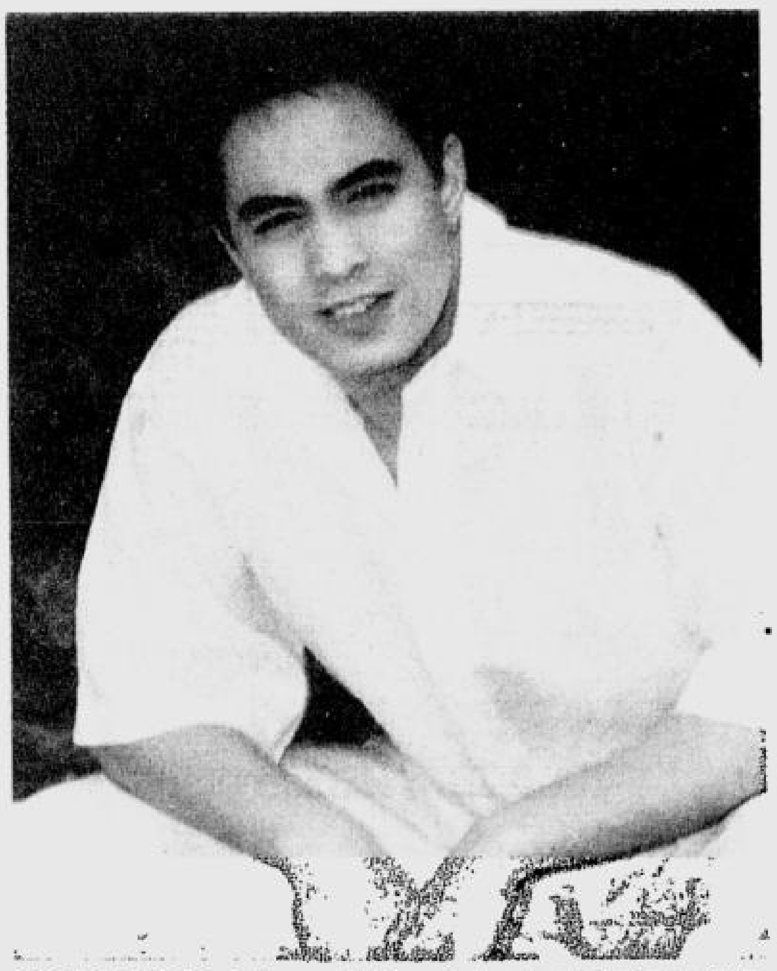
Like her mom, Danica is a contract artist of ALV Productions, under talent manager **Arnold Vegafria**.

Unknown to many, Danica is also an aspiring singer who also dabbles in songwriting, a talent she got from her dad who has composed hits and themes for soap operas and other TV programs.

Danica also wants to go into the restaurant business. She is taking a two-year diploma course in culinary arts and technology management at the Center for Culinary Arts (CCA). With six more levels to go in the curriculum, Danica is halfway through the course, and then she will be due for apprenticeship.

Her mom, herself a good cook, was the prime influence in Danica's culinary passion.

"Every time I cook, I think of the people I'm cooking for and visualize how they'll feel when they taste the food," Danica says. "It's almost like you have a magic touch when you see them appreciate your cooking."



SPOKESPERSON of the youth, Onemig Bondoc is trying to finish his own studies.

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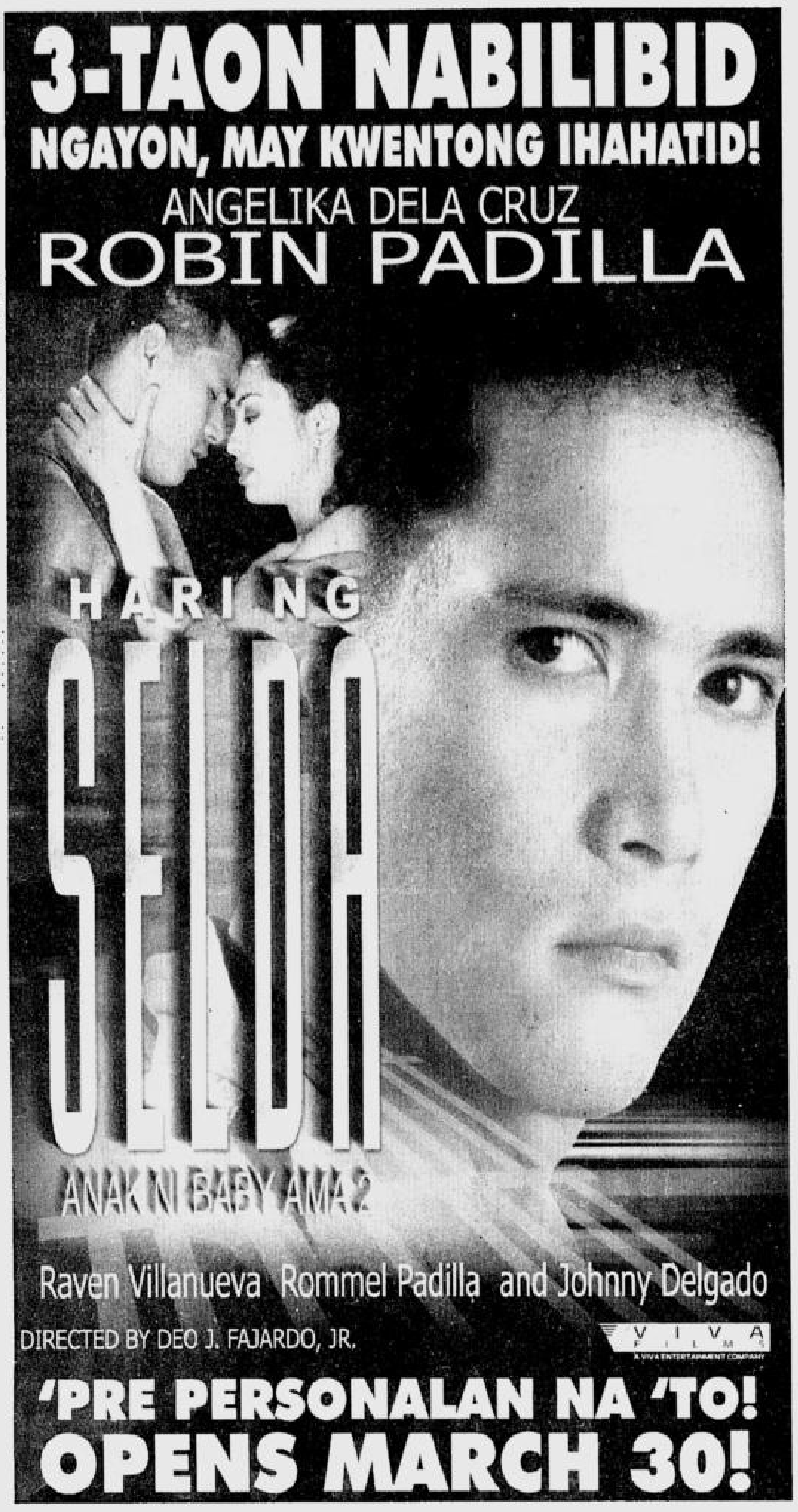
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'PRE PERSONALAN NA 'TO!
OPENS MARCH 30!

Boracay Bodies Model Search 2002 a success

IT WAS a night of fun and fashion with the hottest-hunks and babes as Boracay Bodies Model Search 2002 successfully crowned the search's top picks who best embody the fabulous essence of the paradise island.

Robin Robel and Clarissa Mercado, whose eye-catching looks and fun-loving spirit made them crowd favorites, bagged the top titles of Boracay Bodies Model Search 2002.

Taking their places as 1st runners-up were Randy Mendoza and Gail McMahon while Randolf Stamatelaky and Jennifer Dittmeier were named 2nd runners-up.

Special awards were also handed out to the following models: Best in casual wear—Randolf Stamatelaky and April Tanhueco; Best in formal wear—Glen Magnifico and Lalaine Rosario; best in beach wear—James Berido and April Tanhueco; and Mr. and Ms Sea Air—Robin Robel and Lalaine Rosario.

Voted by the candidates as the guy with the Sunniest Personality was Ryan Lai, while Randy Mendoza and Clarissa Mercado were adjudged Mr and Ms Photogenic.

Boracay, Bodies Model Search 2002 brought together the country's best looking men and women who personify the essence of Boracay Island: Presented by global brands Omega and Philips, with The Sun Village Boracay Resorts, the search successfully put the spotlight on travel, fashion and the good life.

For more information on the Sun Village Boracay Resorts, call 813-1338, 893-9355 or 816-3109, or send fax via 812-4797; e-mail address fuentes@pacific.net. fpnidapacific.net.ph

An exposition on the fragile bonds of home

From page A29

his "dark, secret past."

Lasse is from Sweden, and therefore knows cold and water. He comes from 15 generations of sea captains, and his mother's forebears were exactly like Quoyle's. "One of my ancestors was supposedly decapitated for his crimes," he reveals. "I have pirate blood."

He did not object to the painfully remote location, he says, because for him it was "just a walk on the beach."

Spacey himself says the place has four seasons—fall, winter, misery, and summer—and that cast and crew ran right into the middle of misery. Lying in the midst of live cod for one scene, he is reported to have murmured, "Never act with children. Or with fish."

This trademark humor is evident in his portrayal of Quoyle/Lester: It's there in the tentative smile, equal in both pleasant discoveries (the boss likes him) and small victories (he gets a computer).

Continuum

There is a very good chance that the two actors earlier considered to play Quoyle, John Travolta and Billy Bob Thornton, would have brought just as much depth, entertainment, and luster to the role. But then the Quoyle-Lester continuum would not have emerged.

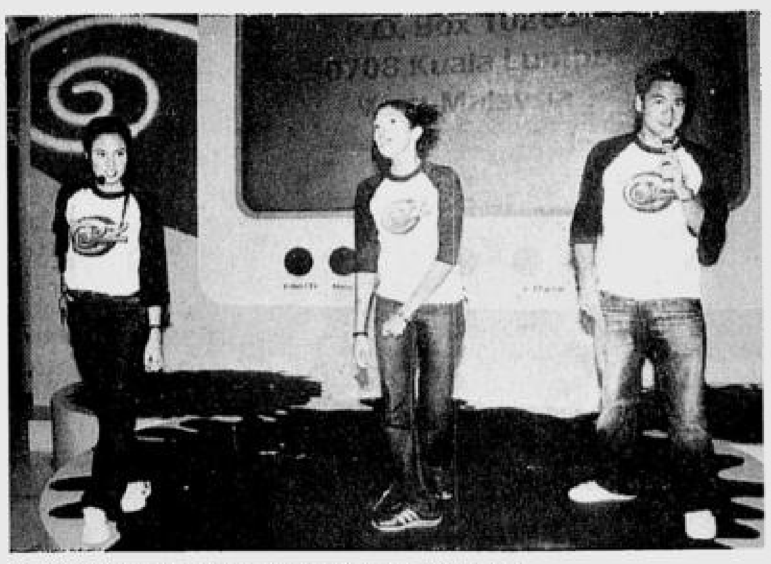
Quoyle's daughter by Petal is such a disturbed child that she is mortally afraid of being found boring. The movie itself stops on the brink of being so, to my infinite relief. Then again, maybe I was happily distracted by my doggedness to read Lester into Quoyle. The dozen or so others in the moviehouse seemed less amused.

All things considered, the real star of "The Shipping News," for me, is the place and its story as a community, woven by the novelist E. Annie Proloux. The message is simple: Everyone deserves a second chance; nobody is hopeless. But he who finds his second chance in so confounding a setting and background as The Gammy Bird tabloid's area of responsibility is sure to have a more engaging story to tell than most other mortals.

GARWOOD PARK HOTEL OPENS
Singer Louie Heredia (left) and MBA Cebu Gems team owner Danny Francisco led the ceremonial ribbon cutting in the opening of Garwood Park Hotel at the Fuente Osmeña Circle in Cebu City. Formerly known as Park Place Hotel, Garwood Park Hotel is counted among the finest business hotels in Cebu. The hotel is accessible to banks, shopping malls, food outlets, beauty salons, flower shops and movie houses. Visit Garwood Park Hotel's Manila sale office at Unit 2005, 20/F Strata 100 Bldg., Emerald Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City. Or call 687-7495 or 687-7725. In Cebu, call (032) 253-1131.

SHARON TO GRACE FUJI LAUNCH TODAY
Megastar Sharon Cuneta, who is the latest endorser of Fuji Film with her beloved Yaya Luring, will be the special guest at the launch of the new Frontier 330 today. A more advanced version of the world-famous Frontier series of minilabs that have won the trust of users around the world because of its remarkable level of image quality, the Frontier 330 delivers advanced, fully digital imaging technology in a new space-saving package.

MAGIC 89.9 AT THE GRAMMYS
Listeners recently stayed tuned to Magic 89.9 as the leading pop station covered live from Los Angeles the 2002 Grammy Awards. Local anchors for the much-awaited musical event were Magic 89.9 station manager Nelson Capulso and DJ Max Speed. To excite the local audience for the coverage, Magic 89.9 aired a month-long Grammy contest, which featured trivia questions. The station also included in its playlist majority of the nominated songs that suited its format. In photo with Magic 89.9's Mo Twister are international celebrities at the Grammys 2002, which was aired in 180 countries that reached an audience of over 2 billion.



'DISNEY BUZZ' GOES TO THE MALL
"Disney Buzz" presenters Jien, Azura and Karen were recently at Alabang Town Center for a meet-and-greet with their fans. The three hosts also shot selected segments for "Disney Buzz" and also hosted fun games for their audience of more than 5,000 kids and parents. "Disney Buzz" is Disney Channel Asia's flagship show for kids ages 8 to 15. It combines interactive segments with programs specifically created for its audience such as "Court Buzz," "Get Spotted," "Booster Pants" and "Top 3.5." Catch "Disney Buzz" on the Disney Channel, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays at 5 p.m.

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JOHN Q - P 13 12:10, 2:35, 5:00, 7:25, 9:50	A BEAUTIFUL MIND- P 13 1:10, 3:55, 6:40, 9:30	THE MAJESTIC - GP 1:10, 4:10, 7:10, 10:10

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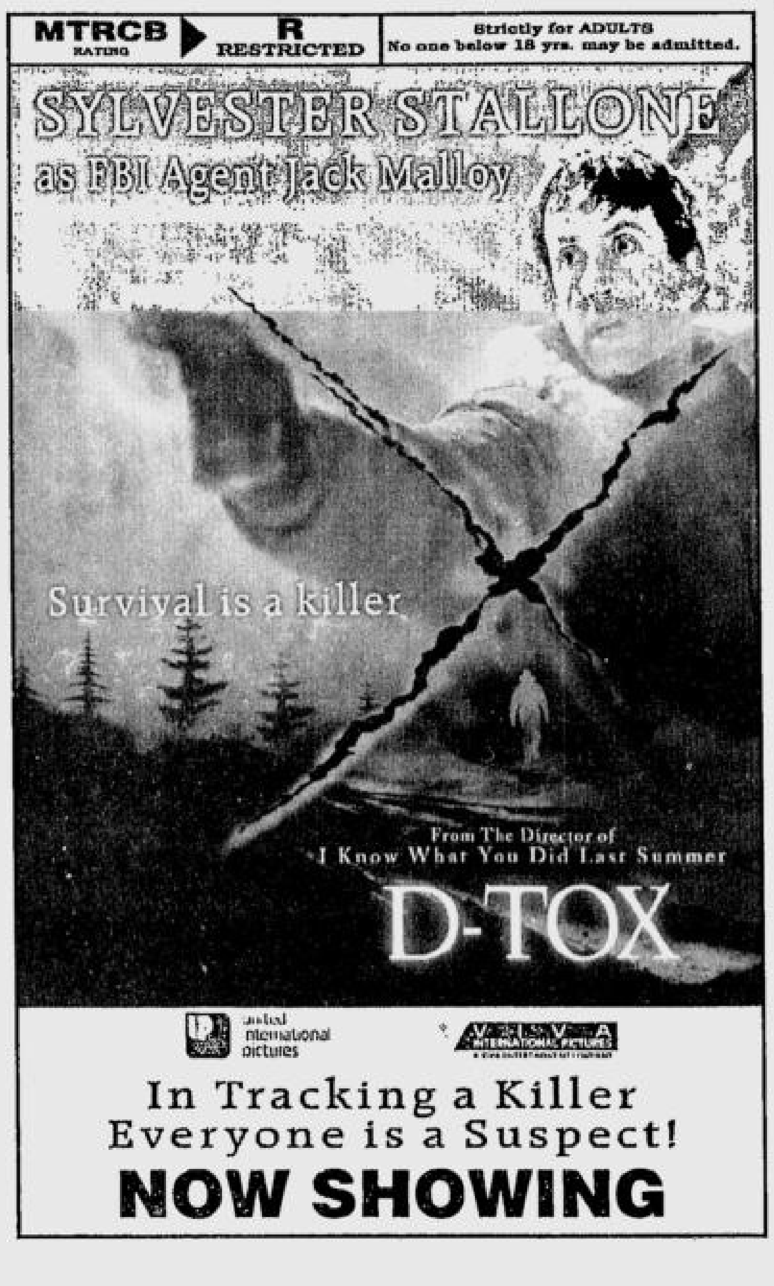
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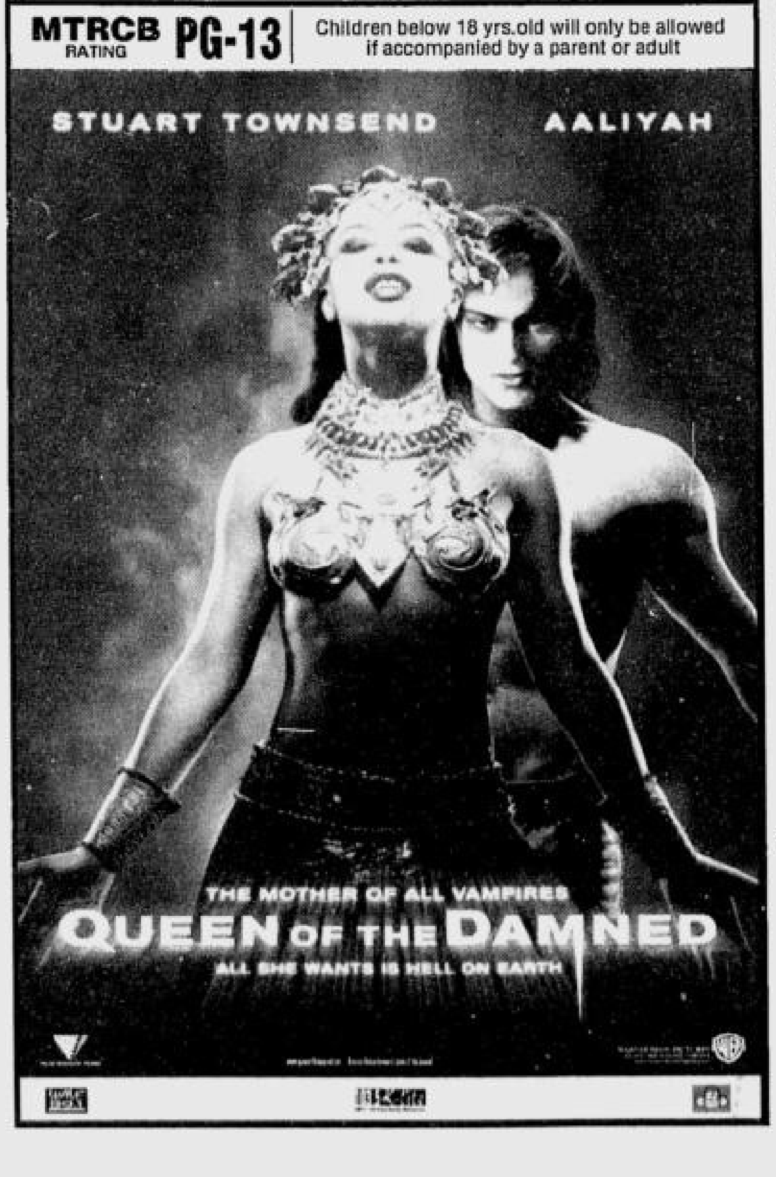

STUART TOWNSEND
AALIYAH
THE MOTHER OF ALL VAMPIRES
QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
ALL SHE WANTS IS HELL ON EARTH

Shouting and screaming

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

THE "PALIBHASA Lalake" syndrome is alive and well again on local TV screens, but in new configurations like "Wattamen" and "Da Klasmeyts."

As for "E Kasi, Babae," the focus on sexy women is once more evident in "Attagirl"—and the curvesome female component in "Da Klasmeyts."

All of which goes to show that old TV formats never die, they just get recycled and repackaged.

In "Whattamen," three young male comers—**Rico Yan**, **Dominic Ochoa** and **Marvin Agustin**—play the usual frisky, *pilyo* boy-next-door types. Last Wednesday, the big to-do was about Rico's being ordered by a lady doctor to drop his pants for a painful medical examination to determine the health of his posterior.

There was lot of shouting and screaming, as though the microphone hadn't yet been invented and the actors were making sure that they could be heard nationwide on sheer lung and diaphragm power alone.

Happily, the three leading gents turn out to be not just loud but also perky performers, so the show is good for some chuckles and a bellylaugh or two—which is more than you can say for some so-called situation-comedies around.

In their case, there's little comedy because their situations aren't really funny. In fact, they aren't situation-oriented at all, and are really just a grab bag of jokes, punchlines, visual gags, etc.

That, in fact, is what the new "Da Klasmeyts" show is: a series of jokes and cracks set in various locations like a jungle, the beach, a massage parlor, etc.

The big challenge here for the show's ostensibly antic performers is the fact that there's a live audience, and consequently no canned laughter.

This is supposed to pressure the cast of comics to try hard to be funny, but the (live) laughs don't really come that strong and fast, so the experiment is only a partial success. Clearly, better gags will up the comic ante, but that has yet to happen.

What did work well last Wednesday was the show's spoof of a dramatic episode in "Tanging Yaman," which was dubbed to make it sound like a quiz show. Some on-target transpositions made the gimmick work, despite its relative length.

Also promising were some of the supporting female talents on the show, who looked good, sang OK and seemed to have a bracing sense of humor. Some of the male leads, alas, tried to get by on sheer excitability and volume. What is it about male comics that makes them so loud?

Still, some of them did deliver in the laughs department, so all was by no means lost. They were led by **Keempee de Leon**, who successfully attempted varied characterizations, unlike some of his colleagues, who appeared to be smugly happy to just be playing themselves throughout the show.

Movies on TV

ON HBO, Wednesday, March 20 at 11:30 a.m., "Introducing Dorothy Dandrige: A True Story." 9 p.m., "Unforgiven."

Thursday, March 21 at 12:15 p.m., "Erin Brockovich." 7:30 p.m., "The Iron Giant." 9 p.m., "Hollow Man." 11 p.m., "Out of Sight."

Friday, March 22 at 8:15 a.m., "Mother Night." 10 a.m., "Dead in the water." 2:15 a.m., "Missing."

On the Cinemax channel on Wednesday, March 20 at 6:30 a.m., "Bugsy." 11:30 a.m., "Shakespeare in Love." 5 p.m., "Snow Falling on Cedars." 1:50 a.m., "8MM."

Thursday, March 21 at 5:30 p.m., "Leaving Normal." 4:45 a.m., "Robin Hood: Men in Tights."

Friday, March 22 at 9:30 a.m., "Picking Up the Pieces." 11 a.m., "It Happened One Night." 5:45 p.m., "The Big Heist." 12:15 a.m., "Beetlejuice."

Tattoo much!

STARS just love having themselves tattooed. For instance, **Sean Connery** has two small tattoos on his right arm that read "Scotland Forever" and "Mum and Dad."

Mickey Rourke has at least seven tattoos, including a tiger's head with Chinese symbols on his left shoulder, a bull's skull on his right bicep, and the I.R.A. symbol on his left forearm.

Christina Applegate has tattoos on both ankles.

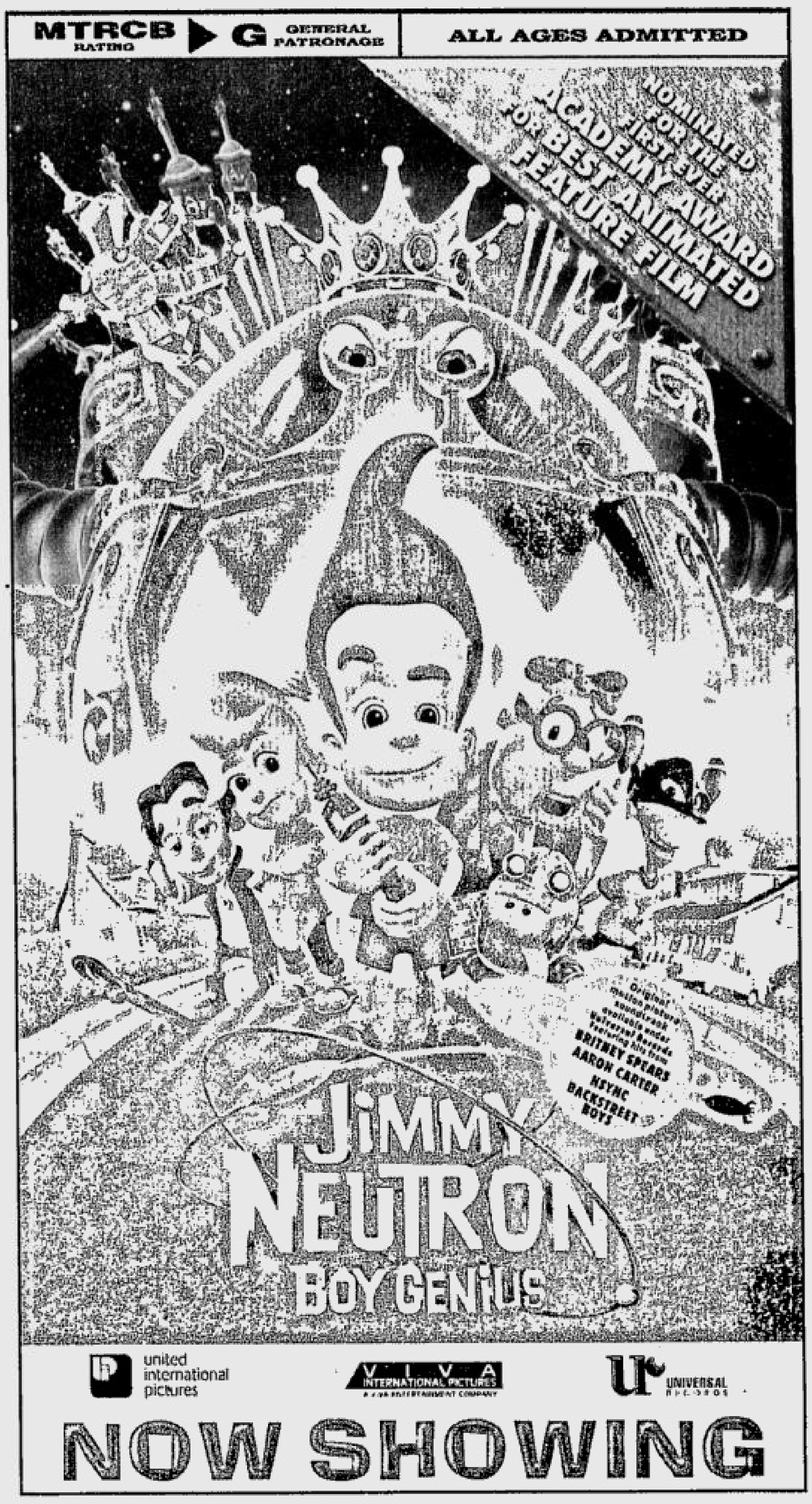
And **Alyssa Milano** has five tattoos that include a heart on her behind, a fairy kneeling in grass on her hip, rosary beads on her back, an angel on her left ankle, and a garland of flowers around her right ankle—!

Show biz stars in Bataan

BATAAN will experience a first-of-its-kind, two concerts in one day, on March 22 at 3 and 8 p.m., with the biggest ensemble of top stars at the Bataan People's Center.

Epicenter Entertainment, with the Public Elementary Schools in Balanga and the Parents and Teachers Association, will bring in the "Stars of Summer SOS 2002." Performers include Aiza Seguerra, John Lapuz, Jeremiah, Carlo Muñoz and Jessa Zaragoza, with the Sex Bomb Dancers.

For ticket reservations, call (047) 237-2770 or 237-3815 or 0916-8507714.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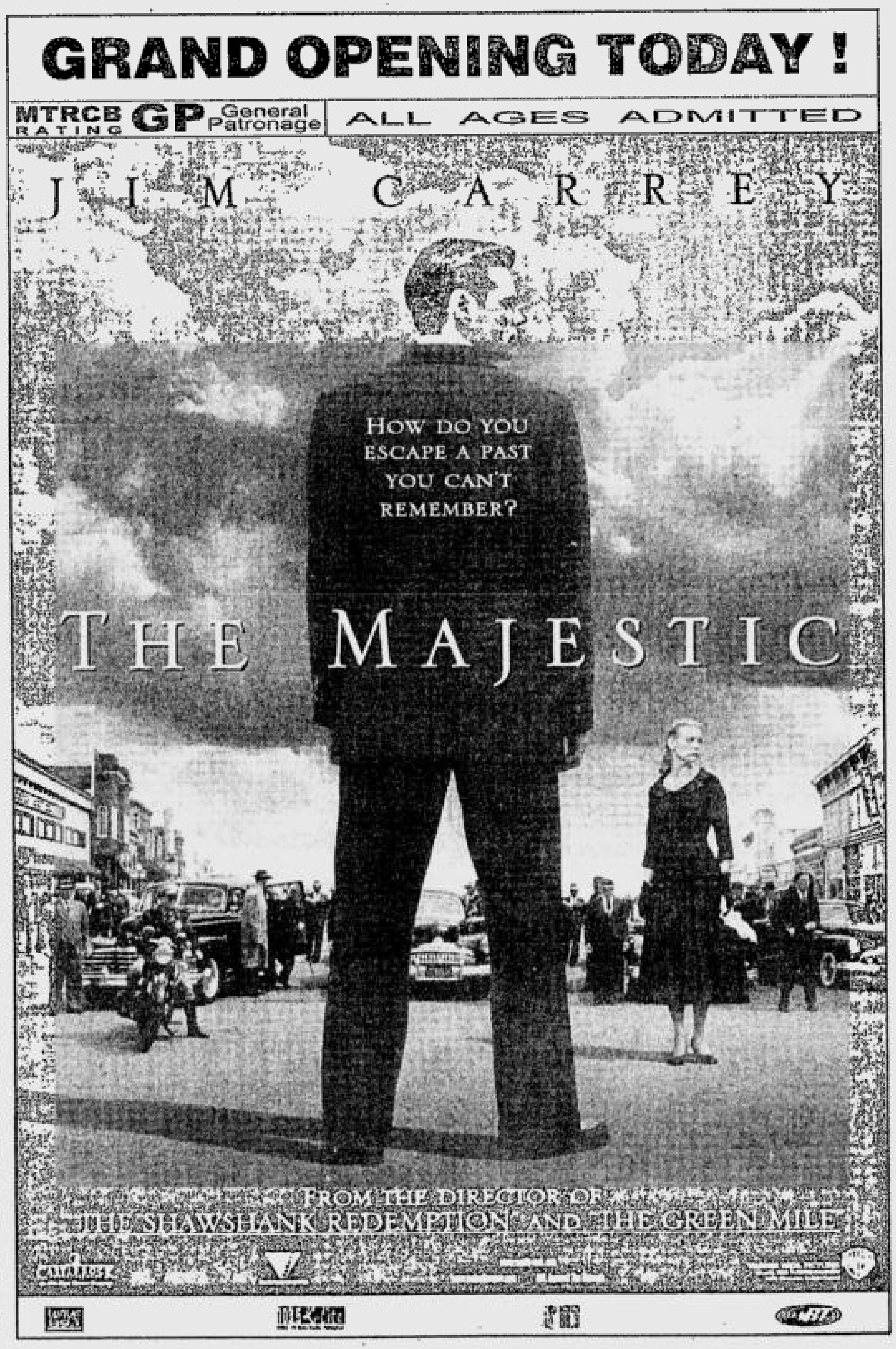
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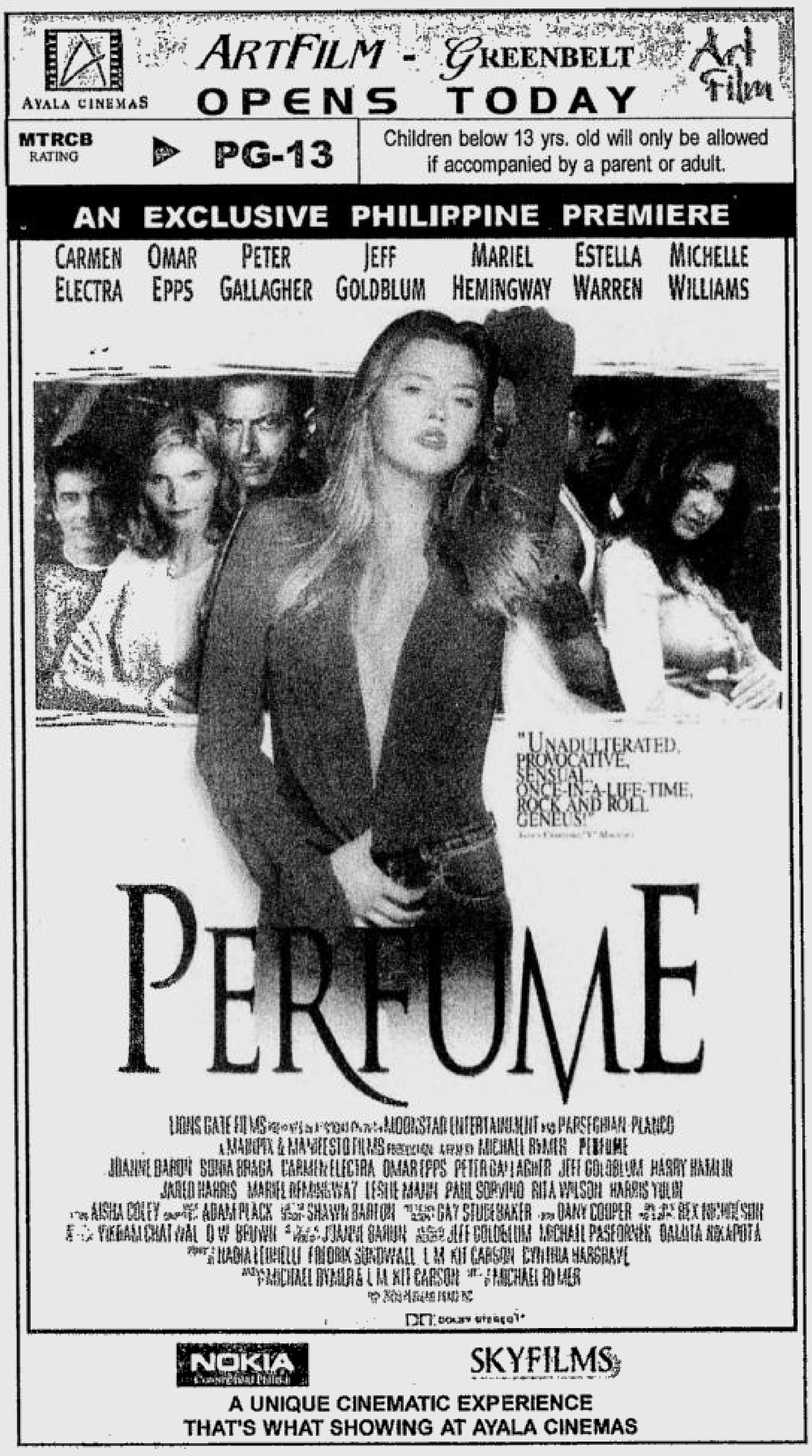
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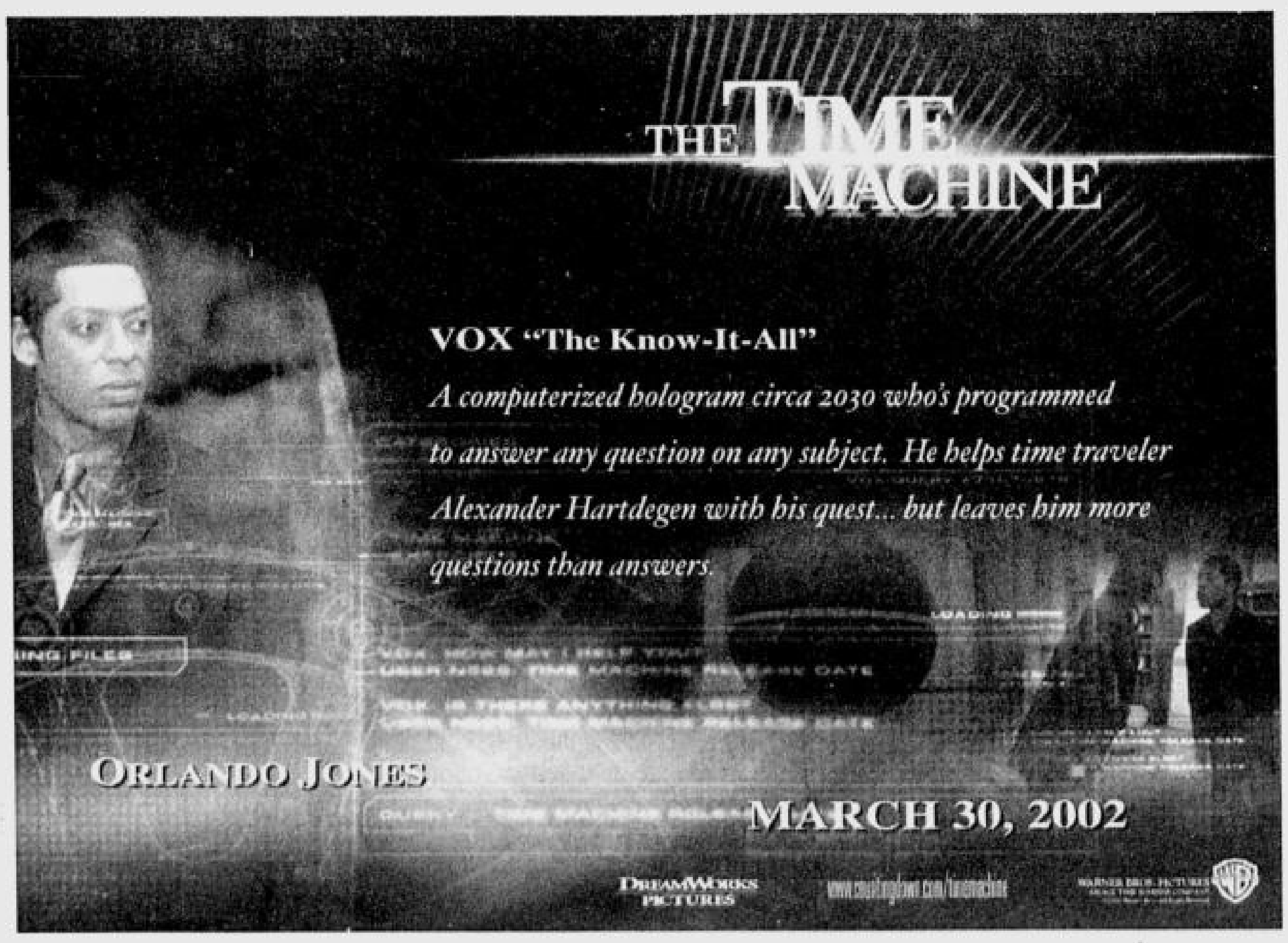
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ORLANDO JONES

MARCH 30, 2002

DREAMWORKS PICTURES
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ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Louie C. Camino

Oscars dogged by talk of foul play, dirty tricks

CROWE and Connely in "A Beautiful Mind," which earned seven Oscar nominations.

LOS ANGELES—As Academy Awards voters finalize their Oscar ballots, an army of stars and spin doctors enlisted by Hollywood are waging a last-minute battle aimed at winning the hearts and minds of voters.

In the final stretch of an Oscars race dogged by whispers of alleged foul play and dirty tricks by studios hoping to give their nominated films a leg up, or to hobble the competition, Tinseltown executives are nervous.

"It's a real campaign frenzy," said Oscars author Tom O'Neil. "Its a classic Oscar scramble which has even the most standoffish stars out kissing babies along Hollywood Boulevard."

As the Oscars race moved toward its crescendo ahead of Tuesday's looming deadline for the return of completed voting ballots from the 5,739 members of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, the stars were out in force.

Peddling

Nominees, or those linked to nominated movies, have been mobilized to appear on even the most obscure of radio and television talk shows, doing their public bit for their movies.

"I go where am pushed," said veteran director Robert Altman whose film "Gosford Park" is nominated for best picture, he said adding that competition was very stiff and that everyone had to rally round to promote the picture.

"A film like 'Gosford Park' had a small budget that can't possibly compete in the marketplace with the biggest films, (so) our job as actors is very instrumental in getting the people to the theaters," said best supporting actress nominee Helen Mirren.

Even contenders like best supporting actor nominee Tom Wilkinson who recoil from publicity campaigns are reluctantly peddling their wares.

"I would like not to do it, but you just can't stop campaigning," he said.

Big business

And while the pundits are furiously putting odds on the winners of cinema's holy grail awards, to be given out at a glitzy ceremony on March 24, the studios are putting their money where their mouths are.

Studios have spent around $60 million on glossy adds in the trade weeklies and other publicity material on this year's nominees—up around 20 percent over last year's spending, according to industry estimates.

But they may have spent up to that much again on local television advertisements in Los Angeles, which are aimed more at influencing Oscar voters, many of whom are based in the city.

The frenzy underscores the fact that an Oscar is not just an honor from industry peers: It's also big, big business.

A film's box office takings can leap exponentially with Oscar recognition, as proved by 2000 best-picture winner "American Beauty" which saw receipts leap by 35 percent after its nomination and by another 26 percent following its win.

Producers hope that huge spending as much as $10 million to $15 million per major picture can help bring the golden guy home to them, while actors' careers can be made by a win.

"The studios will fight to the death right up to the night," O'Neil said. "This is a fight for immortality, for your place in history and if there's one more day of skullduggery to do, they're going to do it."

Smear drive

An indeed, seasonal rumors of skullduggery are swirling through Hollywood again this year, focussing this time on the favorite for best picture, "A Beautiful Mind," which is also nominated for seven other statuettes.

Its furious producers, Universal Studios, have hinted that it was a smear campaign that made so much of the omission from the film of allegations that its real-life hero, Nobel laureate John Nash, was anti-Semitic and gay.

Its star Russell Crowe and director Ron Howard have hit the publicity trail, coming out fighting in the studio's corner.

"I know the studio is upset about (the alleged dirty tricks) and from what I gather I don't blame it," Howard said last week.

He said that while it was acceptable for people involved in a film to help sway Academy voters through publicity, "attempting to undermine another candidate's credibility, that's a shame, that's tragic." **AFP**

E.T. gets makeover

LOS ANGELES—Director Steven Spielberg gave E.T., the spindly alien star of "E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial," a facelift for the movie's 20th anniversary re-release.

Spielberg had more than 140 shots reworked and, in some cases, filmed again for the updated version of his high-grossing classic, set to premier nationwide on Friday.

Special effects artists digitally manipulated E.T. to make the alien appear more lifelike.

Even the movie's signature shot of the boy Elliot riding his flying bicycle in front of a full moon was reshot to replace a figurine used in the original with an actual child.

"What worked in 1982 doesn't quite hold up," said Bill George, who supervised the updated special effects for Industrial Light & Magic.

Superman not giving up

VAIL, Colorado—Christopher Reeve may not be walking on his 50th birthday in September as he once promised, but he isn't giving up hope.

When he's not working on his second book, Reeve is lobbying to lift restrictions on stem cell research that he believes could lead to a cure to his paralysis, and exercising almost daily.

"There will be a cure," he said in an interview at a weekend fund-raising event for the Christopher Reeve Paralysis Foundation. "It is very important for me to stay in the best possible condition to be prepared,"

Since the fall from a horse that injured his spinal cord, Reeve has become an advocate of increased funding for a cure for paralysis. He also has driven himself, riding a bike 10 miles a day three times a week while using electrical stimulation to move his legs.

Lawmaker slams Keys

LONDON—Even Alicia Keys can't win everyone's hearts.

The five-time Grammy winner's performance Friday at a building connected to Parliament has drawn the ire of one of Britain's legislators.

An invited audience of journalists and schoolchildren saw Keys, 21, sing at Portcullis House in a room often used for lawmakers' committee meetings. Playing a keyboard, the singer played songs including her hit single "Fallin" and a rendition of Roberta Flack's "Killing Me Softly."

But opposition Liberal Democrat legislator Paul Tyler was not impressed with the performance, saying Parliament facilities had effectively been used to promote a musician's albums.

"House authorities may have unwittingly created a precedent for all sorts of commercial events," Tyler said. "How can they now resist the Brit Awards, Miss World or the launch of a new deodorant?"

Lawmaker David Lammy, 29, asked Keys to perform there in an effort to convince his younger constituents that Parliament is "hip," not dull.

Lammy said Keys—who grew up in a tough New York neighborhood and whose debut disc, "Songs in A Minor," was one of last year's top sellers - could inspire youngsters from his own inner-city constituency of Tottenham in north London.

"We see, on the news, stories of black boys underachieving in schools, stories about gun violence. Alicia is obviously the opposite to that—and so, I hope, am I," Lammy said. "Soul comes out of the neighborhood, neighborhoods just like Tottenham."

Both Lammy and Keys are black. **AP**

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Controls on used-car imports pushed

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

A DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry-led task force is pushing for tighter controls on the importation of passenger cars, sport utility vehicles and vans to alleviate concerns of Japanese and American assemblers about the unabated influx of used-vehicle imports in the country.

DTI Undersecretary and Task Force chief Adrian Cristobal Jr. said the task force felt that these imported models were in direct competition with the units manufactured by the local automotive industry.

He said he would meet with Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho and Trade and Industry Secretary Manuel Roxas II to discuss the task force's recommendations.

In its recommendation, the task force wanted to disallow 10-seater diesel vans among the pre-owned vehicles that could be brought into the country. Cristobal said this was one of the loopholes that traders were using to bring in used passenger vans into the country.

The task force has likewise pushed for a proper classification of SUVs such as Mitsubishi Pajeros, Nissan Terranos, and Toyota Land Cruisers and Prados. Cristobal said that these SUVs were brought into Subic because the Bureau of Customs classified them as special trucks that were among the used-vehicle models allowed to be shipped into the country. Cristobal said that SUVs should be classified as passenger cars, which are not allowed to be brought in bulk into the country.

Also, Cristobal said the task force was pushing for tighter regulation on shipments of used passenger cars, specifically high-end models such as Mercedes Benz, BMW and Lexus. Cristobal said that while the government allows *balikbayans* to bring in their used cars, these imports were meant for personal use and not for resale.

Cristobal said the task force's recommendations merely reinforced government policy of banning imports of used vehicles.

Aside from tightening on the type of used-vehicle models that could be brought into the country, Cristobal said the BOC has committed to enforce the payment of duties of the used-vehicle imports and the Land Transportation Office has stopped issuing registrations to used-vehicle imports and

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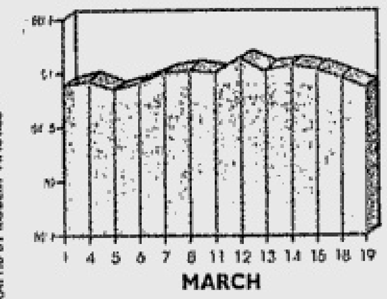
CURRENCIES

PESO - DOLLAR



GRAPHS BY ROBERT ANDRES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱51.13 = $1
As of 5 p.m., March 19, 2002

¥131.44 = $1
As of 5 p.m., March 19, 2002

GOLD: $292/292.50
per ounce Hong Kong, March 19, 2002

STOCK MARKET

Stocks end up

SHARES ended higher for the third straight session yesterday, with active trading in banks and property sectors following the decline in the benchmark 91-day treasury bill rates to record lows.

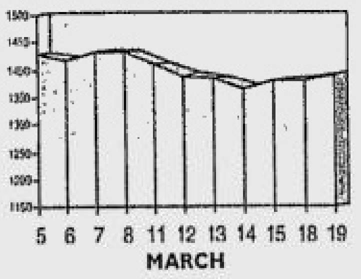
Traders said the market was likely to slip into lethargy in the coming days, as signaled by some profit-taking late in the session, with the Holy Week vacation nearing. Next week, Thursday and Friday are public holidays.

"Overall, we are just adrift. People are raring to go on vacation, they are not focused on the market now," said Allan Araullo, vice president of Regina Capital Development Corp.

The Philippine stock index 9.61 points or 0.7 percent at 1,390.94 points, paring its gains from an intra-day high of 1,399.15 points.

Gainers were in a two-to-one majority, with turnover slightly lower at P432.99 million from Monday's P479.58 million. *Reuters*

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

January trade surplus up as imports slump 18.7%

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE COUNTRY recorded a sharply higher trade surplus in January than it did in January 2001, but the level of imports during the month was the lowest in seven years.

Imports slumped 18.7 percent in January from a year earlier, according to data released yesterday by the National Statistics Office, giving rise to fears a recovery in exports was still some way off.

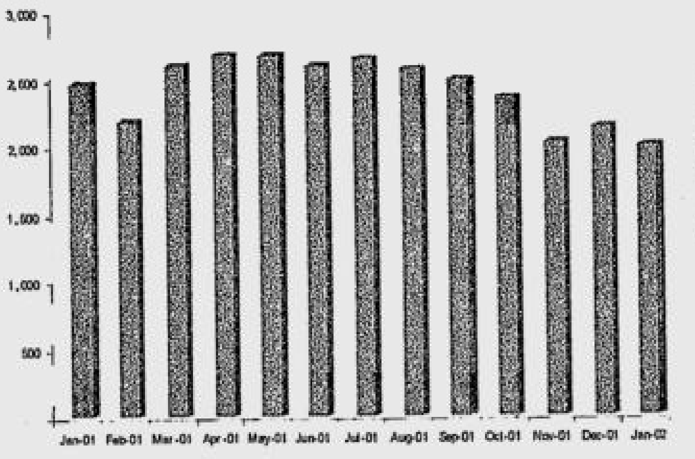
The fall in imports to $2.01 billion was of concern because most of the country's exported manufactured goods rely heavily on imported components and materials.

Although monthly imports data are considered volatile, the 18.7 percent year-on-year fall in January was the sharpest drop since a 23.6-percent fall in November last year. The imports number for January was the lowest since $1.62 billion in February 1995.

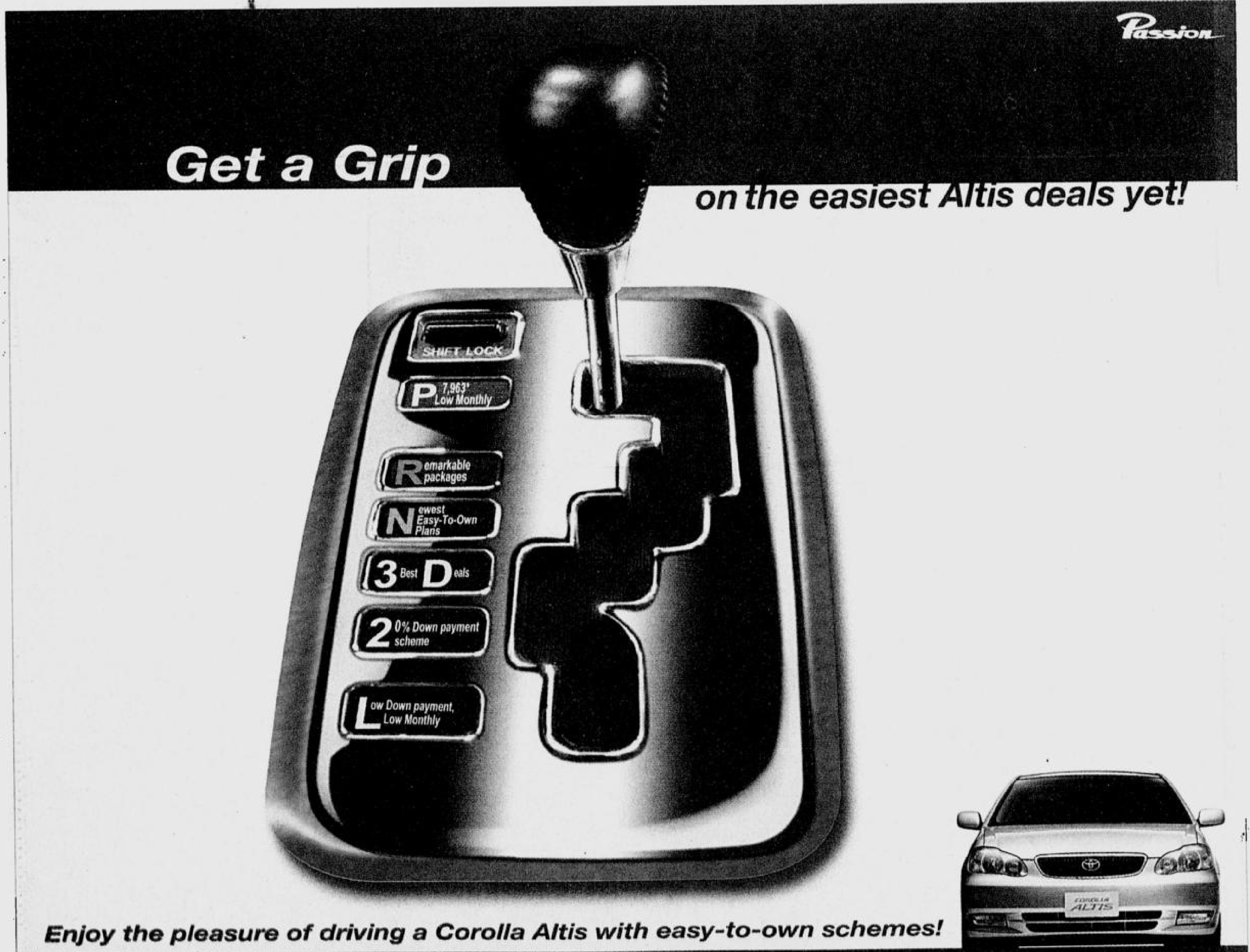
Exports for January were at $2.63 billion, leading to a surplus of $621 million against the $417

JANUARY/ B2

Total Imports
(January 2001 to January 2002, in million US$)



Source: NSO



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MINDANAO PLANTS

1M bags of cement arriving

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

PHILIPPINE Cement Manufacturers Corp. (Philcemcor) will flood Metro Manila and Batangas with a million bags of cement from Southern Philippines this month in a bid to suppress hoarding and price speculation in these areas.

Philcemcor president Francisco Viray said the shipment (half of which arrived at the Batangas port yesterday) was an industry solution reached by Philcemcor members who blamed the cement shortfall in the National Capital Region and Regions 3 and 4 to stockpiling by end-users. "We don't think we should be accused of operating as a cartel because we are doing this for the public interest," Viray said.

The shipments would come from Cemex's Apo Cement (800,000 bags) and Holderbank's Alsons Cement and Davao Union Cement (200,000). NCR and Regions 3 and 4 are currently served by Lafarge-Blue Circle's Fortune Cement Corp., FR Cement Corp., Continental Operating Corp., and Republic Cement Corp.; Cemex's Solid Cement Corp. and Holderbank's Union Cement Corp.

He said Philcemcor has committed to sell the cement between P125 and P135 per bag, the price range it promised to the Department of Trade and Industry in exchange for the provisional duty on imports last November.

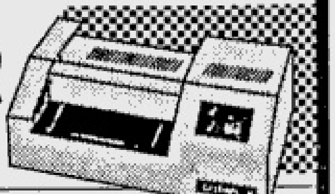
Viray said there should have been no shortfall this month because the cement plants in Metro Manila, Bulacan and Batangas had a combined capacity of 524,000 bags a day against the projected demand of 470,000 bags a day. "We expect demand to stay flat in March (when construction starts to pick up) as January and February sales were down 6 percent from last year," Viray said.

He claimed that the Tariff Commission's rejection of Philcemcor's petition for punitive duties and import quota raised fears of a spike in cement prices, which prompted end-users to hoard cement and jack up prices.

But consumer groups led by the Consumer Union of the Philippines (CUP) and the Confederation of Homeowners Associations for Reform in Governance and Environment (CHARGE) argued that the provisional duty, which adds P20.60 on each bag of imported cement, imposed by the DTI in November caused the shortage and sharp price increases (P140 to P150 per bag).

This was why CHARGE and CUP have urged Trade and Industry Secretary Manuel A. Roxas II to heed the Tariff Commission's recommendation to scrap the provisional duty to give wider access to cement imports and provide a "competitive discipline" to the Big Three—Cemex, Holderbank and Lafarge-Blue-Circle—in the country. CHARGE and CUP recalled that Roxas himself resorted to cement imports to arrest a similar cement shortage a few years ago.

Philcemcor is pinning its hopes on Roxas to pursue definitive safeguard measures against cement imports despite the setback.



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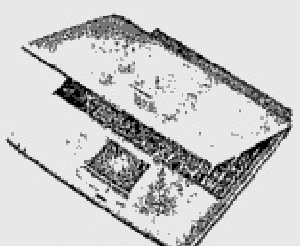

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Ford to export cars from RP

AMERICAN auto maker Ford Motor Co. will begin exporting completely built-up vehicles (CBU) from its Philippine plant to at least two countries in the region beginning this month, company officials said yesterday.

The Ford export program was firmed up during a visit by Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II to Washington, during which he signed a memorandum of agreement with Ford Motor Co. vice chair Wayne Booker.

The company is expected to manufacture and ship a total of 5,467 vehicle units to Thailand and 1,196 vehicle units to Indonesia this year, Ford Philippines president Terry Emrick said.

The exports to Thailand are expected to begin this month while those to Indonesia will begin within the year.

These figures are expected to grow "more than eight-fold within the next five years," Emrick added.

"We are extremely proud of the fact that Ford is the first automotive company in the Philippines to be a volume exporter of CBU vehicles," Emrick said in a statement.

"This is a concrete show of our commitment to assist in the Philippine government's efforts to improve the country's trade balance."

He did not specify what models of CBUs were being exported.

Emrick said Ford had pumped in a total of P4 billion in investments in its manufacturing facilities in Laguna to produce the newest lines of Ford vehicles, including sedans and sport utility vehicles.

AFP

January trade . . .

From page B1

million recorded in January 2001.

Imports, besides being an indicator of domestic demand, also signal export performance in the months ahead since most of the purchases are of electronics components used in the export industry.

The import of electronics components fell 19.25 percent year-on-year in January and were down 6.41 percent from December 2001, the NSO.

Purchases of telecommunication equipment and electrical machinery, which ranked second with a share of 11.1 percent, likewise dropped by 11.3 percent.

Expenditures for mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials as well as office and electronic data processing machines also slowed down by 32.1 and 2.8 percent, respectively.

"This shows that the recovery isn't a complete one yet, it's not that generally strong," IDEAglobal.com economist Julian Wee said.

Japan and the United States were still the country's biggest sources of imports, contributing $368.01 million and $362.16 million, respectively, equivalent to 18.3 percent and 18 percent of the total bill.

"Imports were far weaker than expected, sending another signal of weakening domestic demand," said Gene Frieda, an analyst at 4CAST. "The sharp 12.5 percent month-on-month decline in imports on a seasonally adjusted basis looks like a payback for an exceptionally strong December and then some."

Some economists said, however, that the January imports figure could be only a blip.

With Inquirer wire reports

Don Emilio's double take

IN WHAT could be the turning point in his imperious hold on the country's oldest English daily, Don Emilio Yap has quietly turned over to the Supreme Court about P277 million cash deposited by the estate of the late publisher and Yap's former boss Hans Menzi to Yap's Philtrust Bank.

Philtrust has been holding on to the Menzi deposits, having compounded from the original P49 million principal plus the accrued interests, since 1986.

What has been raising legal eyebrows is that Yap turned over the two checks representing the Menzi deposits to the Supreme Court on Feb. 28, a full two weeks before the Sandiganbayan came out with a March 14 decision saying that those funds were part of the "ill-gotten" wealth of the Marcoses.

How the Supreme Court became a depository of purloined money is not immediately clear, specially right on the eve of a watershed Sandiganbayan ruling precisely on those deposits. Yap's pre-emptive move is a rare public display of the legendary judicial reach and insider network of the reclusive publisher.

Published only yesterday, the Sandiganbayan decision also ordered forfeited in favor of the Republic the 37-percent bloc of the Yap newspaper that the estate of Hans Menzi has been claiming.

If the Sandiganbayan decision is upheld by the Supreme Court, then the P1.2 billion cash, representing the cash dividends that have accrued from the disputed 37-percent bloc, plus the P2 billion in stock dividends that Yap and his newspaper have also been hoarding, should also therefore be forfeited in favor of the government.

(Philtrust, a commercial bank, is not a government depository bank, assuming that Yap is keeping what has been declared as illicit money in his private bank. And the P1.2 billion cash represents interest-free money for the bank.)

What is further complicating the Menzi case is that even before the Sandiganbayan could determine the real ownership of the bloc, and while the court case was still pending, the PCGG in 1987 sold the same disputed shareholdings to Yap and his newspaper!

This was during the Aquino years, where then Adolf Azcuna was presidential legal counsel and, later on, chair of the Presidential Commission on Good Government. (It was during the watch of Ramon Diaz that the PCGG reversed itself and approved the 37-percent bloc sale to Yap and his daily.)

Guess who Azcuna is lawyering for now? Emilio Yap!

Azcuna's law partner, in the meantime, has joined the Macapagal administration to become the PCGG chair, Haydee Yorac.

And in a further testament to his political agility despite his advanced age and his being one of the major deadbeat GSIS borrowers, Don Emilio has been made one of the *ninongs* of the Mikey Arroyo-Angela Montenegro wedding, apparently at the behest of the groom's family.

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

Gunning for Toby

INVESTMENT banker Augusto "Toby" Gan is now in the crosshair of the NGO groups opposed to the multibillion-peso Jancom contract for Metro Manila's garbage.

Gan, adviser to the chair of Investment and Capital Corporation of the Philippines, happens to be the listed owner of 80 percent of Jancom. In addition, his uncle, Leonides "Leony" Gonzalez, is Jancom's nominee chair.

What the coalition of NGOs represented by ex-BIR Commissioner Liwayway Chato, Ana Ugarte, and Patricia Cepeda-Sison wants is to have Gan hauled before the congressional hearings so he would disclose the identities of the beneficial owners of the 80-percent bloc.

Gan, who is in the process of taking over and resuscitating the failed East Asia Capital investment house, does not deny that he is merely warehousing the shares for Vivendi, the French waste management company.

Jancom, per Gan's explanation, is merely a special-purpose vehicle formed for the bidding and would be taken over by Vivendi if and when the legal hurdles to the waste management contract shall have been overcome.

Heard through the grapevine

A SPOKESPERSON for Rep. Prospero Pichay said their camp could not be the source of the "sex dossier" of Comelec Chair Alfredo Benipayo that the other papers so gleefully published since it was only to Cocktales that they had tried to leak the below-the-belt information.

Cocktales had refused to accept or print the Benipayo dossier.

The Pichay spokesperson also said the approach to Cocktales was made without first clearing it with Pichay, who was then in Mindanao. *(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)*

GSIS to boost stock trading

By Clarissa S. Batino

AFTER two years of being a passive investor, the Government Service Insurance System has vowed to trade more actively in the local equities market, encouraged by healthy gains from the bourse in the first two months of the year.

Reynaldo Palmiery, executive vice president and chief operating officer of the GSIS, yesterday told reporters that the pension fund was looking for better investment opportunities given the huge drop in the treasury bill rate, which would bring down earnings from the fixed-income market.

The GSIS official said the pension fund earned P463 million from its stock market trading in the first two months of the year.

Of this, P180 million was considered trading gains as compared to only P95.6 million in trading profits from the stock market for the entire year 2001.

"We will trade more actively in the stock market this year but we would focus mostly on blue-chip companies," Palmiery said.

He said the GSIS had been hunting for bargains in the local bourse since the year started.

Palmiery said the last time the GSIS realized substantial stock market gains was in 1999 when it earned P5.6 billion from its equities investment.

In January, the Philippine stock market index went up by about 19 percent, making it one of the best performing in the world.

Even the volume of trading at the local exchange had increased and exceeded P1 billion a day, a signal that foreign funds were going back to bargain-hunt or cherry-pick. However, the recent leadership crisis at the exchange had been discouraging investors.

Palmiery said the more aggressive investment in the stock market this year should support a 20-percent increase in the GSIS net income this year to P36 billion from P30 billion in 2001.

Gross revenue should grow by about 7 percent to P60 billion from P56 billion last year, he added.

Of the GSIS' P154 billion in total portfolio, about P30 billion is allocated to equities investment. Close to 50 percent of the portfolio or about P80 billion is comprised of loans to its 1.6 million members.

"When gains on the fixed income market is going down, the equities market is a good option. We also need to look for other investment outlets," Palmiery said.

Controls . . .

From page B1

started double checking clearances.

The task force has pushed for the creation of a joint monitoring team composed of the DTI-Bureau of Import Standards, LTO and BOC to be stationed at Subic to monitor the shipment of used vehicles.

The task force was created in response to an appeal by American and Japanese assemblers to the President to impose a ban on used-vehicle imports that were driving them out of business and posing serious risks to safety and the environment.

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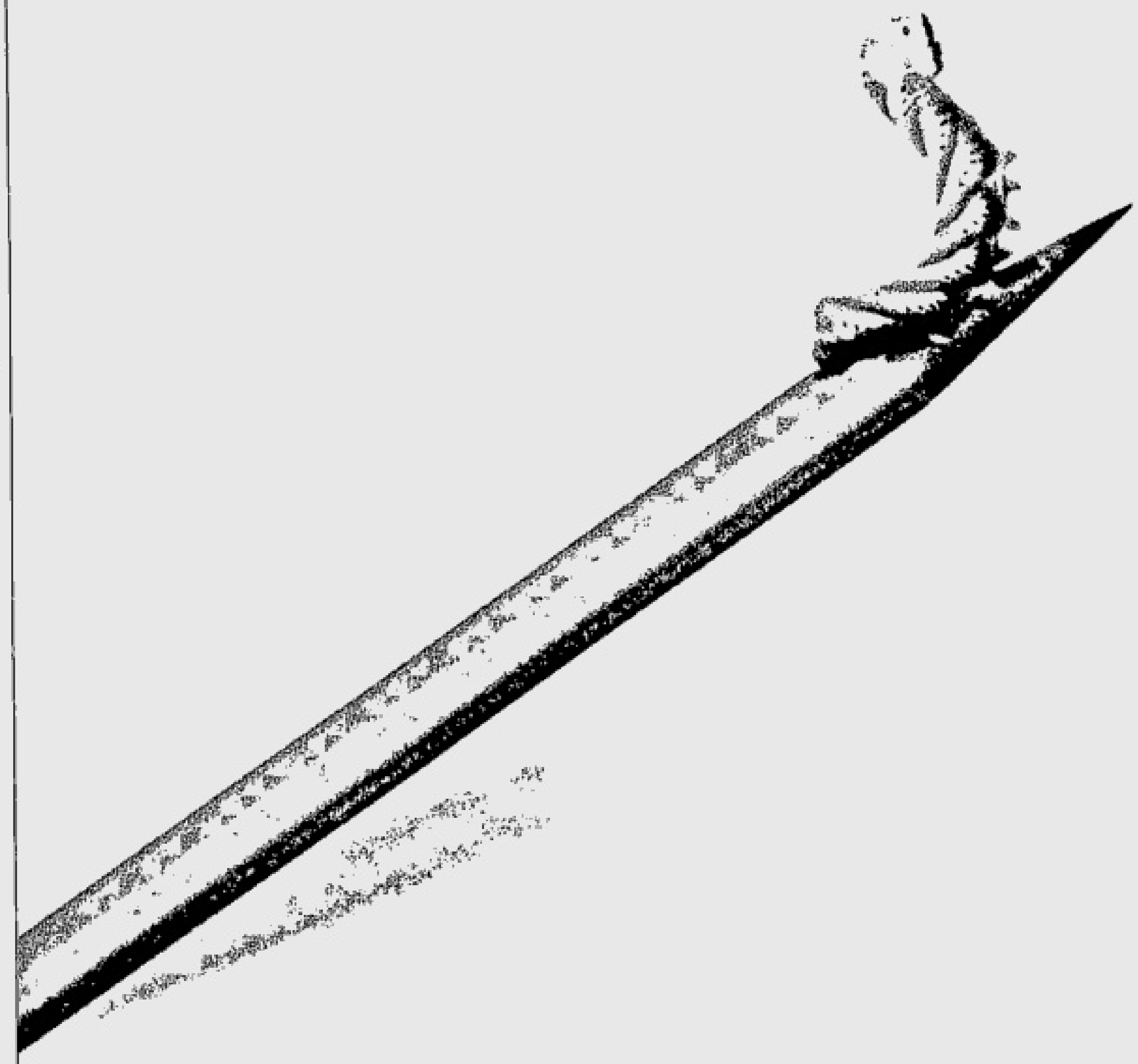

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MARKET DIVERSIFICATION

Petron posts ₱1.22B in profit

By Ronnel W. Domingo

LOCAL oil giant Petron Corp. yesterday reported a net profit of P1.22 billion for 2001, a turnaround from the previous year's net loss of P1.1 billion.

Virginia Ruivivar, Petron corporate communications manager, said the company's outstanding performance last year could be attributed to its "sustained cost-cutting measures and tight risk management."

"Moderate changes in the peso-dollar exchange rate also helped Petron," Ruivivar added.

She noted that Petron, the country's largest oil refiner, maintained its market leadership with a total market share of 38.3 percent despite a weak local demand and the stronger challenges posed by its competitors.

Ruivivar said Petron's share in the retail market went up from 34.9 percent in 2000 to 35.5 percent last year.

Domestic sales, however, declined by 2 percent or a million barrels from 42.3 million barrels in 2000 to 41.3 million barrels in 2001. Petron said this was due to the slowdown in the economy, particularly the industrial sector. This, however, was partly offset by exports.

Petron officials said earlier that sales to its biggest customer National Power Corp. had gone down dramatically due to the government's efforts to promote other energy sources, particularly natural gas.

Despite this, Ruivivar said the firm was confident it would further increase its sales and sustain its profitability in the coming years.

"(Our) cost-optimization and streamlining efforts will give us a competitive advantage," Ruivivar said.

Petron has been increasing its exports as a way to maximize profits.

The firm started expanding its exports markets late last year while giving up some domestic accounts that were not very profitable.

Petron officials explained that this gave the firm margins that were higher than what it could get from local sales.

Petron president Motassim Al-Ma'ashouq, in an earlier interview, said the move was the company's reaction to the decline of local oil demand.

"We try to diversify our fuel oil sales from the local market to the export markets."

Aside from fuel oil, Petron is also exporting naphtha and mixed xylene, which are mainly for industrial use.

PSE independence at stake in squabble, official warns

THE PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange stands to lose its status as a self-regulatory organization if the eight non-brokers sitting on its 15-man board give up their posts, PSE corporate secretary Francisco Villaroman warned yesterday.

"There will be no quorum and, therefore, the exchange will be paralyzed," Villaroman told reporters. "Can you imagine the effect on the market and on the image of the exchange?"

"I'm sure the Securities and Exchange Commission will come in and take over management of the exchange. I think no broker would want this to happen," he added.

The PSE has been beset by infighting since stockbroker Vivian Yuchengco assumed its chairmanship largely on the support of non-brokers sitting on the PSE board.

Yuchengco, president of The First Management Resources, nosed out another stockbroker, Robert Coyiuto, in the race for PSE chair.

Coyiuto protested Yuchengco's election because his slate won five of the seven board seats set aside for brokers. Yuchengco's group fielded four candidates, but only two—Yuchengco and Alicia Arroyo of RCBC Securities Corp.—won.

In the election for chairmanship, Yuchengco got eight votes while Coyiuto got seven. Six non-brokers and two brokers voted for Yuchengco, while two non-brokers and five brokers picked Coyiuto.

Reacting to complaints aired by Coyiuto's group, the eight non-brokers on the PSE board said in a letter that they were "taking your (suggestion that we resign) under serious consideration."

Former PSE chair Harry Liu, one of the five protesting directors under the Coyiuto slate, said yesterday the eight non-brokers should make up their mind soon to resolve the leadership row that was dividing the stock exchange.

GG & A Club Shares

SEC License Broker #007576 * As of March 20, 2002

CLUB	BUYER	SELLER
Alabang Country Club "A" (Filipino)	1,800,000	1,800,000
Alabang Country Club "B" (Foreigner)	1,850,000	Please Call
Baguio Country Club	700,000	750,000
Calatagan Golf Club "A"	70,000	90,000
Calatagan Golf Club "B"	80,000	100,000
Camp John Hay	260,000	280,000
Canlubang	-	650,000
Canyonwoods	Please Call	330,000
Capitol Hills	120,000	135,000
Cebu Country Club	-	2,000,000
Celebrity Sports Club	175,000	190,000
Eagle Ridge "A"/"B"/"C"	Please Call	Please Call
Eastridge "A"	Please Call	Please Call
Evercrest "A"	-	100,000
Forest Hills "A"	200,000	230,000
Forest Hills "B"	250,000	280,000
Forest Hills "C"	-	270,000
Makati Sports Club "A"	265,000	280,000
Makati Sports Club "B"	270,000	375,000
Manila Golf (Corporate)	-	12,500,000
Manila Golf (Individual)	10,000,000	Please Call
Manila Polo	Please Call	2,760,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	630,000	650,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	680,000	700,000
Metropolitan Club "B"	-	150,000
Montemar (Individual)	-	30,000
Mt. Malarayat	-	Please Call
Orchard Golf Club "A"	220,000	250,000
Orchard Golf Club "B"	260,000	300,000
Orchard Golf Club "C"	310,000	360,000
Philippine Columbian	-	85,000
Pueblo de Oro "A"/"B"/"C"	-	Please Call
Puerto Azul	-	125,000
Quezon City Sports Club	200,000	230,000
Riviera Golf & Country Club "A"	-	Please Call
Rockwell	Please Call	550,000
Sherwood Hills "A"	-	150,000
Sta. Elena "A"	Please Call	1,900,000
Sta. Elena "B"	2,000,000	Please Call
Subic Bay Yacht (Corporate)	-	330,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Individual)	-	190,000
Tagaytay Country Club	390,000	450,000
Tagaytay Highlands	650,000	Please Call
Tagaytay Midlands	780,000	-
The Country Club	Please Call	Please Call
Valle Verde (Individual)	160,000	170,000
Valley Golf	230,000	-
Wack-Wack Golf Club	7,000,000	Please Call

PLAYING RIGHTS (Available Lessors)

Alabang "A"	25,000	Mimosa Golf	25,000
Calatagan "A"	10,000	Orchard "A"	30,000
Canlubang	60,000	Riviera "A"	15,000
Eagleridge	15,000	Sta. Elena	60,000
Eastridge "A"	20,000	Tagaytay CC	20,000
Forest Hills	30,000	Tagaytay Golf	45,000
Manila Southwoods	20,000	Tagaytay Mid.	35,000
Makati Sports "A"	25,000	Valley Golf	20,000
Manila Golf	300,000	Wack-Wack	90,000

For more information, please call:
MAKATI 840-1761 • Fax 894-3021 / 750-7894
ALABANG 850-8223 • Fax 772-1617
or e-mail at: ggashare@mozcom.com
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PNOC unit sees larger natural gas reserves in Tarlac prospect

THE PNOC Energy Development Corp. said last week it would drill new wells in Victoria town, Tarlac, after it completes a new survey of a natural gas prospect in the area.

"We are doing more tests for the seismic survey," PNOC-EDC vice president Sam Javellana told reporters.

The PNOC-EDC has been drilling the Victoria-3 well using decade-old seismic images that, according to experts, are like ultrasound images.

Javellana said larger natural gas reserves might be found somewhere else in Tarlac.

"The Victoria-3 drilling could determine only the gas reserve in that (spot)," he said. "Depending on the results of the survey, we might look for potential new wells."

Javellana said the consortium that explored Camago-Malampaya off Palawan had to drill several wells to see how much natural gas was in the area.

Developed at a cost of over $4.8 billion, Camago-Malampaya is currently one of the world's biggest natural gas projects. It currently yields 200 barrels of natural gas a day pumped into Luzon through a 501-kilometer underwater pipeline.

The government is seen chalking up P200 billion from Camago-Malampaya.

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez Jr. described earlier as "lenient" the commercial viability of the Victoria natural gas prospect.

"Commerciality for Victoria may be defined differently because the reserve is onshore (or inland)," Perez said. "Victoria could be viable even if the reserve is relatively less."

Extracting natural gas onshore will be much cheaper than offshore, he said.

Perez, who is also chair of the Philippine National Oil Co., said two or three months were needed to drill more wells and conduct more tests in Victoria.

The PNOC-EDC has an 85-percent stake in the Victoria project, while the PNOC Exploration Corp. holds the remaining 15 percent.

PNOC-EDC chair Sergio Apostol said earlier Victoria's viability would be known by June after a seismic survey had been made.

The PNOC-EDC hopes to prove a reserve of 300 billion cubic feet of natural gas, which can fire up a 300-megawatt power plant.

Apostol said based on the current gas flow rate, engineers estimated that the reserve could support at least a 6-mw plant. ***Ronnel W. Domingo***

Asian CEOs form business council

HONG KONG—The Asia Business Council, a not-for-profit consortium of CEO-level business leaders with operations stretching across the region, has announced its formation and its goal of filling a leadership vacuum in Asia by providing a collective voice for Asian business.

In a statement, Asia Business Council said it was planning to develop a collective view to influence corporations and government and enhance the vitality and future growth of Asia by focusing on economic issues that impact on the region.

"There are many changes taking place in Asia today, some of them global while others are unique to the region," said the chair of the council's board of trustees, Ronnie Chan, who is also chair of the Hang Lung Group in Hong Kong.

In order to achieve its objectives, the council will examine areas central to Asia's viability, including:

- Globalization and its effects on the region.
- The role of the private sector in facilitating the growth of knowledge-based economies through education and training.
- The need for a better understanding of how the private sector should participate in policy-making across the region.

"We know that impressive research and resources are going into these areas across Asia as realization of their importance grows. Our role is to pull the best together, develop positions surrounding them and utilize the findings for the benefit of our members and the region as a whole," said vice chair Suppiah Dhanabalan, chair of Temasek Holdings, Singapore.

The formation of the Asia Business Council, which will be headquartered in Hong Kong, was brought about by a series of meetings held by a number of corporate decision makers. Members must either be a company chair, chief executive or its top decision maker.

Current members are drawn from companies based in China, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Indonesia, the Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand and the United States. The council allows non-Asian members but only up to one-third of its membership.

Current members from the Philippines are JG Summit Holdings chair and CEO James L. Go, Ayala Corp. chair and CEO Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala II, SGV Group founder Washington Z. Sycip (also a board trustee) and Interpacific Holdings Inc. CEO Peter Zuellig.

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DISLOSURES

SM Development Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 24, 4 p.m. at the Ballroom of Mandarin Oriental Hotel, Makati City. Stockholders of record as of March 25 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

MANILA Electric Co. clarified that National Power Corp. came out with a press release on the penalties imposed on Meralco even as negotiations have been ongoing since January for a transition supply contract. Meralco maintains it cannot be made to comply with the contract terms since Napocor also breached several provisions of the 10-year sales contract.

* * *

PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co. denied that it was planning to make new investments or acquisitions.

* * *

UNIWIDE Holdings Inc. submitted to the Securities and Exchange Commission for approval a signed agreement for dacion en pago with the Land Bank of the Philippines. The agreement provides for the settlement of P723 million worth of secured obligations to the bank. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Tuesday, March 19, 2002)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.1	21,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	65	65.5	65	65	713,300
Citystate Savings Bank	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	34	35.5	34	35	1,308,300
First E-Bank Corp.	2.48	2.65	2.46	2.5	463,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	44	44.5	43.5	44	218,000
Philippine National Bank	60.5	60.5	60.5	60.5	4,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	12.75	12.75	12.75	12.75	2,600
Security Bank Corp.	18.5	19	18.25	19	11,500
Union Bank of the Phil.	20.5	21	20.5	21	[illegible]
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.3	1.32	1.3	1.3	[illegible]
Manulife Financial Corp.	1400	1410	1400	1410	[illegible]
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	0.88	0.9	0.88	0.9	120,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1050	1070	1050	1065	3,870
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	33.5	34	33.5	34	52,800
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.7	0.71	0.7	0.71	8,100,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	790	790	790	790	6,210
Ipeople Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	50,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.0675	0.07	0.065	0.065	19,700,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3	3	3	3	14,000
Piltel	0.46	0.46	0.45	0.46	1,500,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	535	535	525	530	86,920
Ivantage Corp.	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.51	120,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.022	0.022	0.02	0.021	67,500,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	30.5	30.5	30	30	99,300
Manila Electric Co. B	43	44	43	43.5	751,100
Petron Corp.	1.82	1.84	1.78	1.78	4,171,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	200,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	30,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	1,298,000
Negros Navigation Co. Inc.	0.76	0.76	0.76	0.76	340,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Alsons Cement Corp.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	140,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	500,000
Fortune Cement Corp.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	40,000
Republic Cement Corp.	0.62	0.62	0.62	0.62	60,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.22	2.22	2.22	2.22	51,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	5.8	5.8	5.8	5.8	16,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	12.75	12.75	12.75	12.75	14,500
Liberty Flour Mills Inc.	20	20	20	20	100
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	38,200
RFM Corp.	1.5	1.56	1.5	1.56	2,753,000
Swift Food Inc.	2	2.04	2	2.04	27,000
San Miguel Corp. A	47	47.5	47	47.5	307,500
San Miguel Corp. B	62	63.5	62	63	32,500
Vitarich Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	100,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	10,000
Ayala Corp.	6.5	6.7	6.5	6.6	3,128,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.98	1.98	1.98	1.98	634,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.53	60,000
APC Group Inc.	0.125	0.125	0.12	0.12	340,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	2,000,000
Anglo Phil. Holdings Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	300,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	3.15	3.15	2.95	3	1,161,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	60,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.78	0.8	0.77	0.77	6,610,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.145	0.145	0.145	0.145	50,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.3	0.31	0.3	0.31	400,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	0.1	0.105	0.1	0.1	7,100,000
Fil-Estate Corp.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	1,000,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.12	1.16	1.12	1.16	4,194,000
First Phil Hldgs. Corp.	31	31.5	31	31.5	82,800
Global Equities Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.135	0.14	800,000
Ionics Inc.	7.8	7.9	7.8	7.9	375,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.88	1.88	1.88	1.88	28,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.85	0.86	0.85	0.86	2,320,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	40,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.3	0.32	0.3	0.32	2,780,000
Music Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.29	0.29	1,000,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.92	0.93	0.92	0.93	100,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.155	0.155	0.155	0.155	20,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	100,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Chemical Ind. of the Phil	55	55	55	55	4,400
SPI Technologies Inc.	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	5,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.48	0.5	0.48	0.49	280,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.37	0.39	0.37	0.37	460,000
Mondragon Intl Phils. Inc.	0.45	0.46	0.41	0.44	540,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	34	35	34	34.5	155,600
DMCI Holdings Inc.-Pref.	790	790	790	790	2,400
Equitable PCI Bank-War	1.72	1.74	1.7	1.7	91,000
Jollibee Warrants	12.75	12.75	12.75	12.75	53,500
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0012	0.0012	0.0008	0.0008	233,000,000
RFM Corp.-Pref.	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	3,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series N	10	10	10	10	200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series O	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series P	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	600
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Q	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	900
PLDT (10% Pref) Series U	10.5	10.5 1	0.5 1	0.5	200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	800
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	100
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,000
Philweb.Com Inc.-Warrants	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	1,000,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.5	6.7	6.5	6.6	13,221,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	120,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	150,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.48	0.5	0.48	0.49	6,650,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	1,040,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.28	2.36	2.26	2.28	8,489,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.38	0.39	0.38	0.39	510,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	1.76	1.76	1.76	1.76	32,000
SM Development Corp.	0.94	0.94	0.94	0.94	10,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.4	6.5	6.4	6.5	3,365,000
Universal Rightfield Prop.	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	400,000
MINING					
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	13,300,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines B	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	1,000,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	300,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.215	0.215	0.215	0.215	300,000
Omico Corp.	0.0048	0.005	0.0046	0.005	104,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	150,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	10,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	3,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	20,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	20,000
Pacifica	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	3,200,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	600,000
Vulcan Ind'l.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	150,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	3,207,680	111,185,345.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	378,372,730	187,074,525.00
PRO	33,887,000	132,964,840.00
Mining	119,060,000	1,237,100.00
OIL	26,970,000	274,800.00
GRAND TOTALS:	561,597,390	432,736,610.00

AVERAGES		
Banks & Fin Svc	561.86	UP 4.30
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,911.71	UP 9.57
PRO	599.78	UP 9.01
Mining	1,337.17	UP 26.61
OIL	1.73	DOWN 0.02
All Shares Index	761.24	UP 8.98
Composite	1,390.94	UP 9.61

NO. OF ADVANCES: 52; NO. OF DECLINES: 26; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 37;
NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 115; NO. OF TRADES: 2,561

CURRENCIES

March 19, 2002

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.132503	1.000000	50.9710
Japan	Yen	0.008626	0.007617	0.3882
United Kingdom	Pound	1.616195	1.427100	72.7407
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.145210	0.128220	6.5355
Switzerland	Franc	0.683136	0.603209	30.7462
Canada	Dollar	0.715189	0.631512	32.1888
Singapore	Dollar	0.620040	0.547495	27.9064
Australia	Dollar	0.593866	0.524384	26.7284
Bahrain	Dinar	3.004146	2.652661	135.2088
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.302001	0.266667	13.5923
Brunei	Dollar	0.620379	0.547795	27.9217
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000113	0.000100	0.0051
Thailand	Baht	0.026094	0.023041	1.1744
UAE	Dirham	0.308357	0.272279	13.8783
Korea	Won	0.000861	0.000760	0.0387
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.883000	45.0074
Brazil	Real	0.483975	0.427350	21.7825
Denmark	Kroner	0.134494	0.118758	6.0532
India	Rupee	0.023283	0.020559	1.0479
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.298027	0.263158	13.4134
Mexico	New Peso	0.124858	0.110250	5.6196
New Zealand	Dollar	0.492864	0.435199	22.1825
Norway	Kroner	0.129075	0.113973	5.8093
Pakistan	Rupee	0.018938	0.016722	0.8523
South Africa	Rand	0.095570	0.084388	4.3013
Sweden	Kroner	0.110247	0.097348	4.9619
Syria	Pound	0.021990	0.019417	0.9897
Taiwan	NT Dollar	0.032422	0.028629	1.4592
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.001217	0.001075	0.0548

MONSANTO BACKS FOOD PROGRAM
Monsanto country director Juan Ferreira (3rd from right) signed a memorandum of agreement with Philrice committing the company's support to the government's program to maximize the productivity of agricultural land in the country. Presidential Adviser for creating one million jobs Secretary Luis F. Lorenzo Jr. (center) and Philrice executive director Leocadio Sebastian signed for the government.

Upgrade of RP credit rating unlikely, says Moody's exec

By Clarissa S. Batino

AN official of Moody's Investors Service yesterday said the agency was not inclined to upgrade the Philippines' sovereign rating in the next two years despite the growing clamor for such from the government and the private sector.

After restoring its outlook for the Philippines to stable last February, Moody's is not expected to make any adjustment in its outlook or rating for a year or two, the agency's senior vice president Brian Cahill told reporters in a forum sponsored by BNP Paribas.

"The normal process is to keep the stable outlook for one to two years. After that, we will take a look at it again to determine whether we have to revise the outlook. Only then will we consider any action on the rating itself," said Cahill.

Tom Cant, global head of BNP Paribas' ratings advisory shared the position of the Moody's official saying it was unlikely that there would be any change in the ratings or the outlook for the Philippines in the next 22 months.

Government officials led by Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho are open to reviving talks for an upgrade in the country's credit rating to investment grade. Some foreign banks operating in the country like Standard and Chartered Bank Phils. were supporting an improvement in the country's sovereign outlook.

The Philippines was rated below investment grade by Moody's and Standard & Poor's. A country's credit rating helps determine the pricing of its foreign borrowings.

An investment grade leads to lower costs of foreign borrowings for the government and an improved confidence of investors and creditors in the country.

European rating firm Fitch is scheduled to conduct its annual evaluation of the Philippines from Wednesday to Friday. Sources said Fitch was preparing to upgrade its outlook for the Philippines from stable to positive, which is a step closer to a rating upgrade.

Among the top three global rating firms, Fitch was the last to downgrade its outlook for the Philippines to negative during the last few days of the Estrada administration.

The two New York-based firms gave the country a negative outlook at the height of the juetengate scandal in October 2000.

Fitch was also the first to upgrade its outlook from negative to stable a year ago. Moody's revised its outlook to stable last February and S&P was expected to follow suit soon.

Export sector projects 10% growth in '02

RECOVERING from a two-digit decline last year, the country's export sector has set a fighting growth target of 10 percent this year.

The target was a big jump from a zero growth projection set by the exporters early this year when they finalized the new Philippine Export Development Plan (PEDP). It was also more optimistic than the 1.5 percent revised growth target made by Economic Planning Secretary Dante Canlas.

"We made the revised target at a meeting of the Export Development Council (EDC) on March 14," Philippine Exporters Confederation (Philexport) president Sergio R. Ortiz-Luis Jr. said.

"The 1.5 percent (growth rate) is too conservative a projection." Ortiz-Luis stressed.

He explained that if the sector could meet just half of its fighting target, it would already contribute about 2 to 3 percent to the over-all economic growth. At worst, it will no longer be a drag to the country's economic growth.

"We lost 15 percent last year. It will take us years to recover if we will aim for only 1.5 percent growth this year," said Donald Dee, president of the Employers Confederation of the Philippines and one of the country's biggest garment exporters.

The multi-billion-dollar electronics industry was as bullish on the prospects of exports. Semiconductor and Electronics Industries in the Philippines Inc. (Seipi) executive director Ernie Santiago said that electronics exports were seen to start kicking up this April.

"If the recovery of the United States economy holds, the export sale of integrated circuits, personal computers, laptops, cellular phones and other high technology electronics product will pick up at an even faster pace by the second half of this year," Santiago said.

The US is the prime destination of electronics products made in the Philippines.

Philexport News and Features

MNCs to meet with GMA today

MORE than 260 executives of multinational companies are scheduled to meet with President Macapagal-Arroyo and her key Cabinet members today to discuss the achievement of the President's first year in office and where the government is headed over the next two years.

Peter Wallace, the organizer of the conference, explained that there had been a significant shift in business sentiment over the past few months, with uncertainty turning toward optimism that the Philippines has now stabilized and is positioning itself to move forward as the world economy recovers.

A survey conducted prior to the conference showed that 86 percent of these executives believed that the President was doing a good job, only 2 percent thought she wasn't. A confidence level that is expected to translate into more investments by 41 percent of the companies surveyed.

They were, however, almost equally split on whether political stability had been achieved considering the uncertainties former President Estrada introduced with his recent actions and the yet-to-be-resolved conflicts in the South with the Abu Sayyaf and the MILF.

McCann bags ₱400-M SMC deal

MCCANN Erickson Philippines Inc. was awarded yesterday the P400-million advertising account of food and beverage giant San Miguel Corp.

McCann is the country's largest advertising agency.

McCann had held the account for 20 years when San Miguel decided to entertain the offers of other agencies.

McCann bested three other big agencies: Foot, Cone & Belding Worldwide, Lowe Lintas & Partners, and Jimenez and Partners.

Margie Quimpo-Espino

Home & Office Networking Tutorial 1 2 3 4

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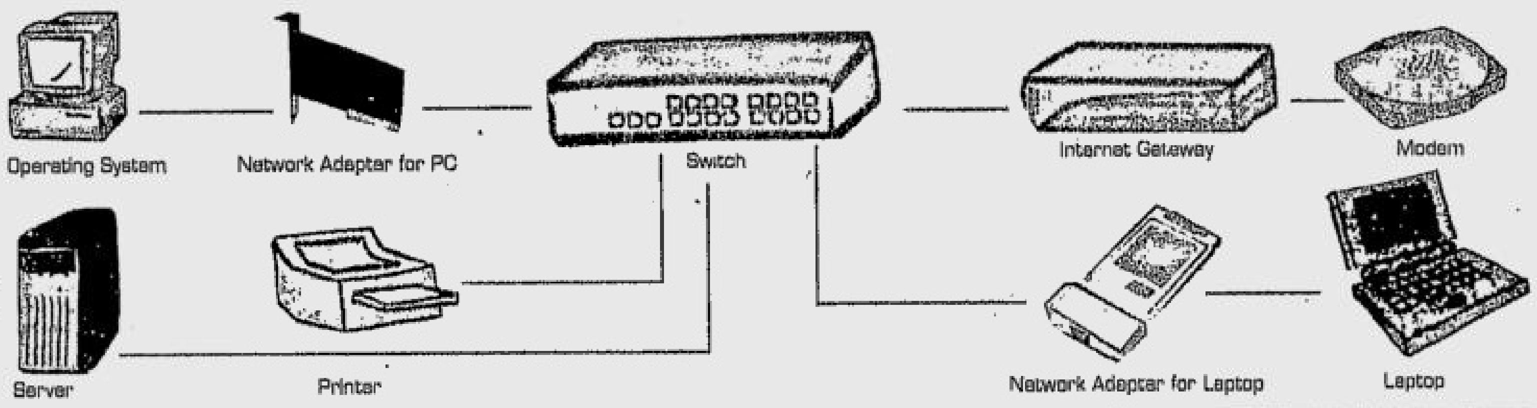

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Working women seen lifting Asian economies

SINGAPORE—Singapore's economic planners should be happy to know that Prapaporn Rojanarowan is contemplating returning to the city-state's workforce after spending nearly two-and-a-half years at home taking care of her children.

"I chose to take the time off to take care of my kids. But when my son is older, I'll be ready to go back to work," said the mother of two one afternoon, while her 3-year-old daughter angled for her attention.

And if more women follow Prapaporn, a Thai native with a degree in electrical engineering, Asian countries looking to boost domestic consumption in order to wean themselves off export-dependent growth could start seeing results, analysts say.

That's because getting more women to work gives consumption a kick-start. It also boosts potential economic growth because unpaid work at home isn't counted in a country's gross domestic product and leads to other flow-on economic benefits.

A housewife who trades in her apron for a briefcase, hires a cleaner and orders take-out for dinner, contributes to the economy not only through her work and income but also through the money she spends on the cleaner and the take-out food.

"If you follow the cliche that women make up 50 percent of the population here, then of course your economy will grow as more women join the formal and informal economies, and what does the region have but population?" said Shireen Lateef, a strategist at the Asian Development Bank in Manila who specializes in gender issues.

Besides fueling consumption, there are many other positives from women working, said Ian Chambers, the director for East Asian branch of the International Labor Organization in Bangkok.

Among the biggest were that more working women meant more entrepreneurs—and Chambers said studies showed female entrepreneurs tended to be more tenacious and successful.

Long way to go

But in a region where some countries grapple with high mortality rates for infant girls and sex discrimination in the workplace is the norm, it's pretty unlikely that women in Asia will soon be joining the workforce in droves.

A report by US consultancy group McKinsey & Co. in January showed South Korea, one of Asia's most developed countries, had the lowest percentage of college-educated women in the workforce among members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, based on a 1998 survey.

Only 54 percent of college-educated women in South Korea between the ages of 24 and 64 work compared with 92 percent in Sweden, 82 percent in the United States and 76 percent in Turkey.

"That's not surprising given that in Korea, women are expected to marry, have children and then stay at home to raise their children," said Clifford Tan, an economist at Salomon Smith Barney in Singapore and author of a recent report about the ways that Asia could increase its domestic consumption.

And South Korea isn't alone. According to the McKinsey report, 98 percent of college-educated men in Japan work compared with 68 percent of women. In the Philippines, it's 83 percent of college-educated men and 47 percent of women.

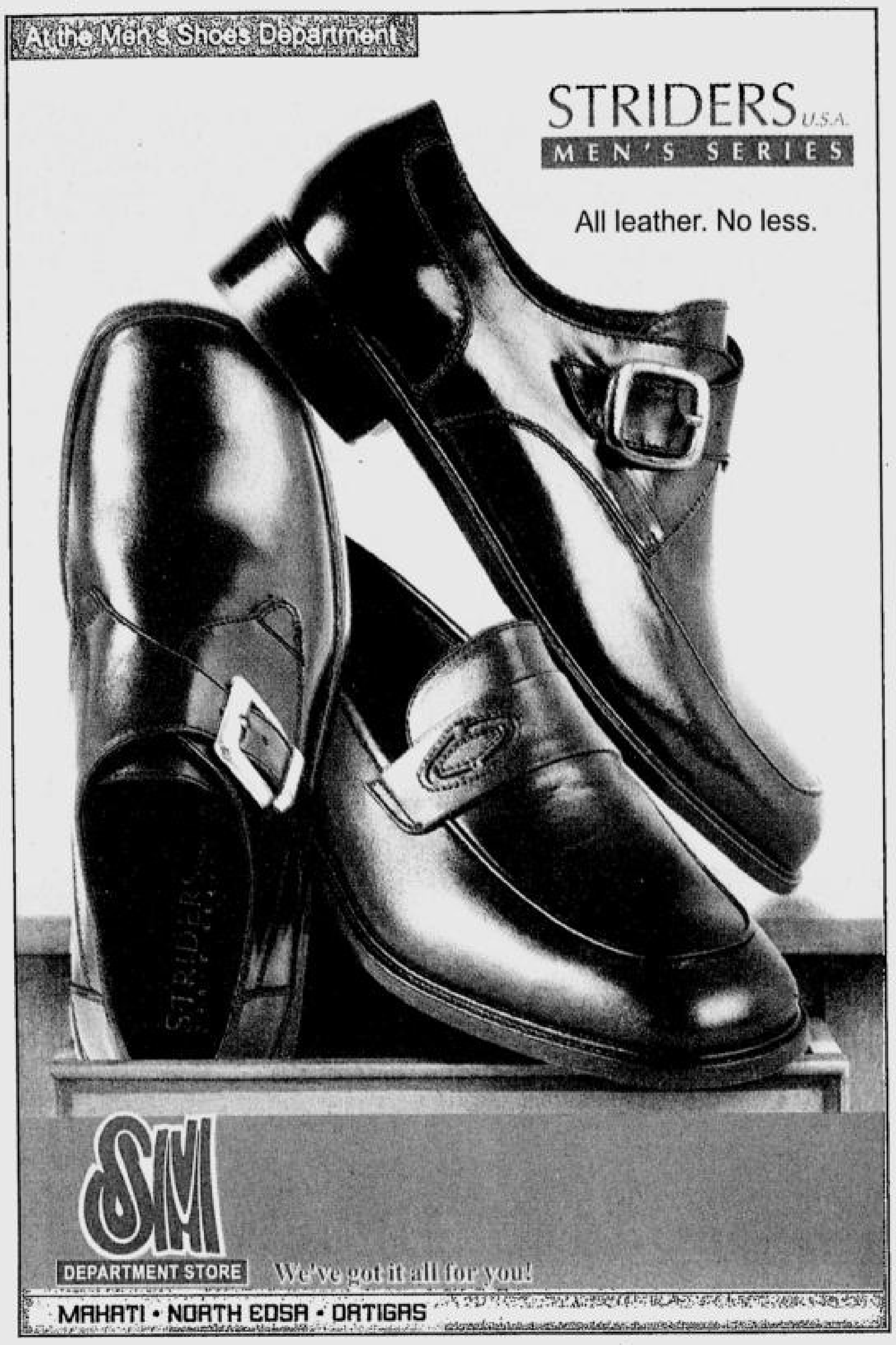
It can also be difficult to gather information on just how many women are working, especially in less developed countries.

"It's hard to get accurate statistics because in somewhere like Indonesia you might have a farmer with a wife who works at home and later goes out into the field to work with him," said Dr Lorraine Corner, the economic adviser in Asia of the United Nations Development Fund for Women in Bangkok.

"And it's also contingent on cultural factors, whether it's acceptable for women to work. In these surveys, it's usually the head of the household who is asked, and that's usually a man who may or may not want to say his wife or other females in his household are working."

Experts also say women bore the brunt of the layoffs during the 1997-1998 Asian financial crisis and probably again during the economic slowdown which started last year.

"There's the sense among many employers and even many government policymakers that the man is the breadwinner for the family rather than the woman," said the ILO's Chambers. ***Reuters***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OECD economies post record low growth

PARIS—The 30 OECD economies grew by an average 0.1 percent in the 2001 fourth quarter from the previous quarter and a record low of 0.4 percent on a 12-month basis, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development said Monday in releasing preliminary estimates.

Annual growth in gross domestic product in the final quarter last year rose 0.4 percent compared with the figure for the same period in 2000 but shrank in half from an 0.8-percent annual GDP growth in the third quarter, the OECD said in a statement.

The 0.4-percent annual growth figure was the weakest expansion since the beginning of 1995, the first year in which comparable OECD data was available for all 30 member countries, the OECD said.

GDP in the 2001 third quarter contracted 0.1 percent.

In the euro zone, GDP dropped 0.2 percent in the fourth quarter, the first decrease since the first quarter of 1993.

Full-year euro-zone growth in the fourth quarter of last year amounted to 0.6 percent, down from 1.4 percent in the previous quarter.

Japanese GDP showed a drop for the third consecutive quarter, registering a decline of 1.2 percent in the fourth quarter from the preceding quarter and 1.9 percent lower than in the same period one year earlier.

In the United States, GDP rose 0.3 percent in the fourth quarter and 0.4 percent on a 12-month basis.

Among Group of Seven industrialized countries, Canada showed the strongest growth, up 0.5 percent from the previous quarter and 0.9 percent on an annual basis.

France also posted 0.9-percent growth over 12 months, the report said. ***AFP***

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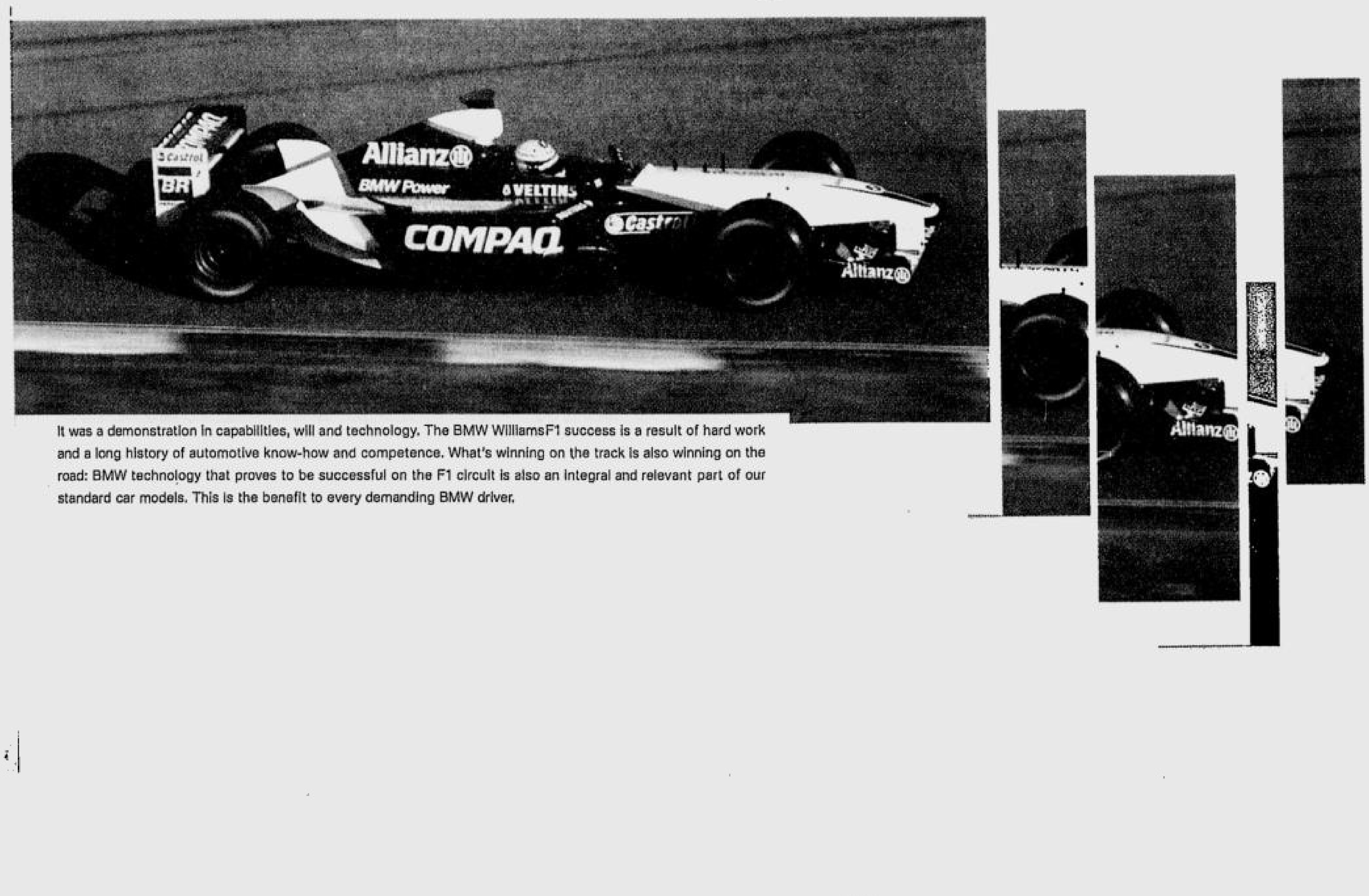

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Singapore says export-led formulas are irreplaceable

SINGAPORE—Southeast Asia's economic prosperity will continue to hinge on export-driven policies despite the "painful" changes forced by globalization, Singapore deputy leader Lee Hsien Loong said Tuesday.

Although the region was criticized during the 1997-98 financial crisis for being overreliant on exports and foreign investment, Lee said there was no alternative for the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

"For small Asian economies, and Singapore in particular, the idea of relying on tiny domestic markets to stimulate growth and enterprise is inherently implausible," he said in a keynote speech to an Asian investors forum.

"Larger economies may make more of their domestic markets, and indeed the Asean countries as a group need to integrate their markets in the Asean Free Trade Area to make themselves more attractive to foreign investments.

"But no single domestic market can substitute for the world market, an age where economies of scale are global, whether in industries like electronics and pharmaceuticals or services like banking and telecommunications." *AFP*

With aid falling, gov't's look to business to pick up the slack

MONTERREY, Mexico—As rich nations give less money to poor countries, they are increasingly pressuring private corporations to help them support the world's neediest.

On Monday, dozens of business leaders, including members of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, helped kick off the UN International Conference on Financing for Development by exploring how they can work with governments to help fight poverty.

The new cooperation between the public and private sectors appears to be in the interests of both. Anti-globalization protests have damaged corporations' images, and the Sept. 11 attacks showed how divisions between the world's rich and poor countries can explode in terrorism.

On Monday, hundreds of protesters marched through Monterrey's streets saying the meeting was more of the same thing. Police kept their distance, and no violence was reported.

Rich countries "have money spilling out of our wallets right now," said Jeffrey Sachs, director of Harvard University's Center for International Development. "On the other side, we have people dying for lack of basic needs."

UN officials estimate that $100 billion a year is needed to combat poverty, more than double what governments currently give. The European Union and the United States pledged last week to increase aid by billions of dollars, but UN officials say much more is needed.

To that end, they are turning to business leaders who have long been accused of creating more problems in the developing world than they solve.

"It's not like 10 or 20 years ago when the private sector was considered the enemy," World Bank official Bassary Toure said.

In Mexico alone, President Vicente Fox has launched a program aimed at encouraging private investment in areas with high migration rates to the United States—his main effort at stopping the thousands who sneak across Mexico's northern border each year.

But while businesses have invested and seen encouraging results in middle-income nations in Asia and Latin America, officials are urging them to go even further and consider helping the world's poorest nations, especially in Africa. *AP*

Japan woes seen costly to world role

TOKYO—Warning Japan that policy delay would be costly and could dim its global leadership role, a top US economic adviser on Tuesday urged Tokyo to fight deflation and act fast to clean up the banking system's huge bad loans.

"It is difficult to project influence, to project power, to be a major player on the world stage without a rigorous economy," Glenn Hubbard, one of US President George W. Bush's senior economic advisers, told a group of journalists.

"The price of inaction really is high. The problems will get more costly for Japan the longer it waits," said Hubbard, in Japan to meet government officials and attend a symposium. *Reuters*

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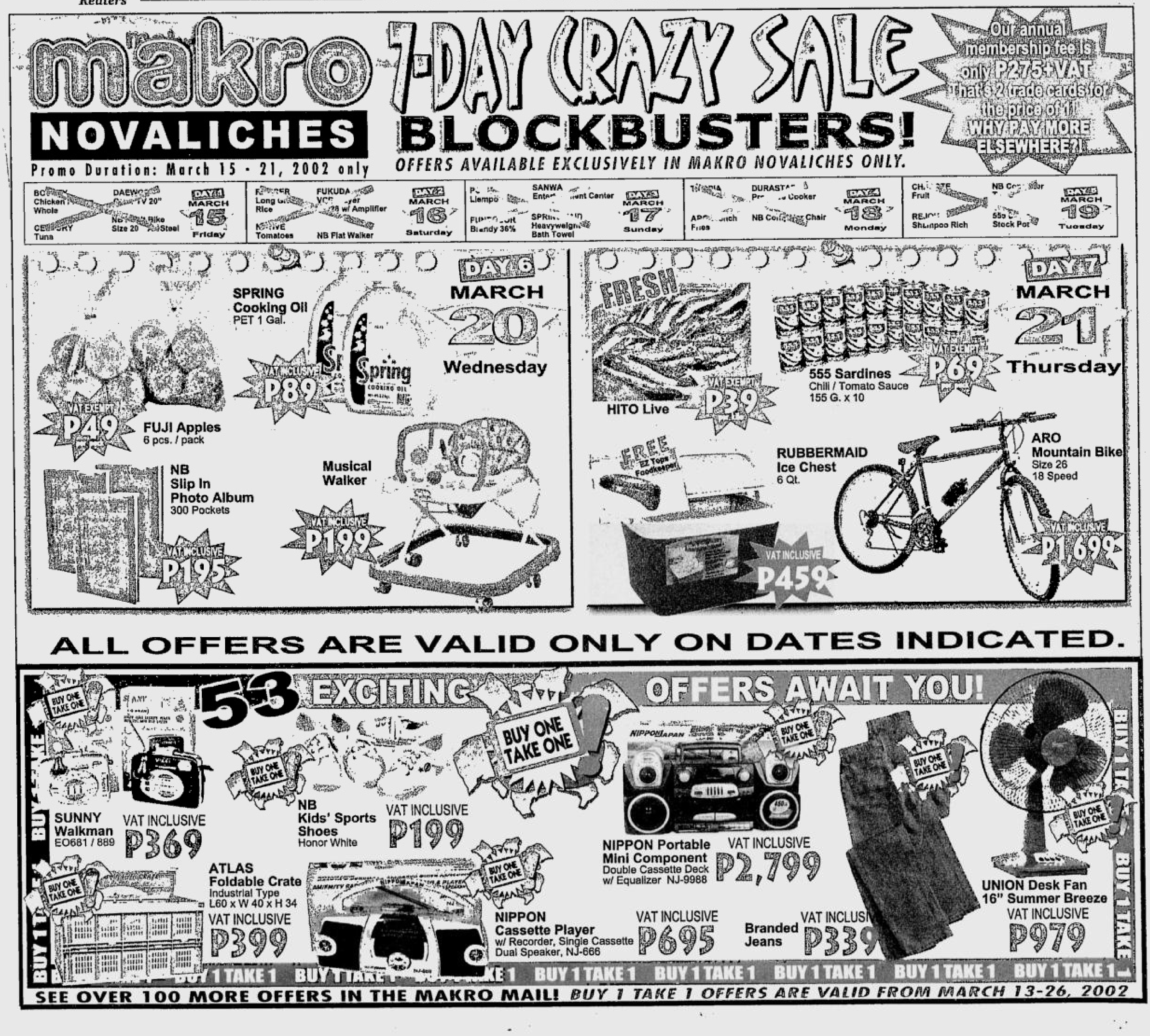
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ANNOUNCEMENT

TO ALL BIRCI MEMBERS

Following are the winning numbers in the recently conducted "BIRCI Kotseng Pamasko Grand Raffle 2001" held at the Patio, AFPCOC, Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City on March 15, 2002.

First Prize - Toyota Corolla Altis 1.6E (Ticket No. 4756)

Second Prize - Toyota Corolla 1.3 LE (Ticket No. 2647)

Consolation Prizes
One (1) P30,000.00 (Ticket No. 3891)
Two (2) P20,000.00 (Ticket Nos. 5472 & 7311)
Ten (10) P10,000.00 (Ticket Nos. 0728, 7256, 6903, 3218, 0532, 9546, 6177, 0452, 5386, 8339)

Winners may claim their prize at the PMA Alumni Center, A. Luna Avenue, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City. Prizes not claimed within sixty (60) days from the date of the raffle draw shall be forfeited in favor of the BIRCI.

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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late Mario Nieto Y Sanchez had been extrajudicially settled among his surviving heirs per Doc. No. 338; Page No. 68; Book No. I Series of 2002 by Maria Obdulia Vitug-Palanca Notary Public
(PDI-March 13,20&27, 2002)

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN the ESTATE of the late VICTOR RUIZ AGUILAR was settled EXTRA-JUDICIALLY with waiver of rights as per Doc.No. 195 Page No. 39 Book No. III series of 2002 before Notary Public ATTY. PERFECTO SOTORIDONA
March 20, 27 & April 3, 2002

WARNING TO THE PUBLIC

Please be warned that a person claiming to be a certain Dir. Luis Madrigal with the following cellular phone numbers:

0918-7806445
0918-7900765
0917-3821911
0917-2070874
0920-70337691

has been representing to the public that he has address at Blue Cross Building No. 1031 Makati Avenue, Makati City.

Please be advised that Blue Cross Center does not know any one by the name of Dir. Luis Madrigal. Such a person, if he does exist, does not hold office at the Blue Cross Center.

Blue Cross Group of Companies
Blue Cross Center
8000 Makati Avenue, Makati City

INQUIRER TRIVIA

By BONG BARRAMEDA

Body rock

Q. What are kidney stones made of?

A. Most consist of calcium, which has precipitated out of urine and crystallized. Victims of gout (a disease marked by deposits of uric acid salts in joints and tissues, especially of the feet and hands, with swelling and great pain) sometimes form stones made of uric acid. Kidney stones may be miniscule in size, or as large as an inch or more in diameter. Experts say about 85 percent of all kidney stones are small enough to move through the urinary tract and out of the body without any need for surgery. However, a large stone that becomes lodged in the renal pelvis, the ureter or the bladder causes agonizing pain and obstructs the kidneys. There are a number of ways to prevent the formation of stones, the most inexpensive being to drink plenty of fluids daily.

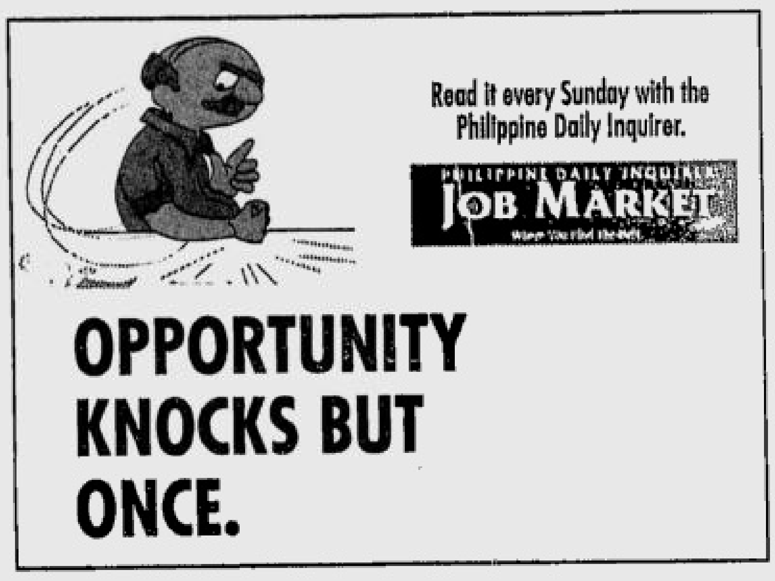
Real Names. Birth names of some rock music icons: Charles Edward Berry (Chuck Berry); Johnny Allen (Jimi Hendrix); Frederick Bulsara (Freddie Mercury); Reginald Dwight (Elton John); David Jones (David Bowie); Paul Hewson (Bono); John Bongiovi (John Bon Jovi).

First of All. The first compact discs were developed in the Netherlands by the Dutch electronic giant Philips over a period of 15 years and demonstrated at the Salzburg Music Festival in Salzburg, Austria, in April 1980 by the noted Austrian composer Herbert von Karajan, who declared that 'all else is gaslight.' The pioneering grooveless miniature 12-centimeter discs had a playing time of 75 minutes each.

WORD WATCH

Nephrolithotomy (nef ruh lit'ho tuh mee) : the surgical removal of a stone from the kidney.

PDI – March 20, 2002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Telefax No. (632) 893-0232

INVITATION TO BID

The PNOC Coal Corporation (PCC) invites accredited contractors to submit sealed bids for the:

CONSTRUCTION OF DRIER SYSTEM
(CN 02-001)

Bid documents may be secured from the Administrative Department (c/o Ms. Gilda F. Capistrano/Mr. George N. Alejandro) starting March 25, 2002 upon payment of a non-refundable fee of PESOS: Five Hundred (P500.00).

Sealed bids in two (2) sets shall be received by the Administrative Department not later than **2:00 o'clock P.M. of May 7, 2002 and then publicly opened at 2:30 P.M.** of the same date at the above address.

For the purpose of clarifying certain issues, a pre-bid conference will be held on **April 17, 2002, 2:00 P.M. at the PNOC-CC Conference Room, Bldg. 2, Ft. Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila.**

PCC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, or to accept such bids or to award any part of the work to any bidder/s whose bid/s is/are considered most advantageous to PCC.

(Sgd.) **Cristina B. Berin**
Chairperson
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI--March 20 & 27, 2002)

PNOC ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

PNPC COMPLEX, MERRITT ROAD, FORT BONIFACIO, MAKATI CITY
Tel. No. 893-1320 LOC. 5279

INVITATION FOR BIDS

1. PNOC - Energy Development Corporation (PNOC-EDC) has received an ODA loan from Japan Bank for International Cooperation (hereinafter referred to as JBIC), in the amount of 14,460,000,000.00 Yen towards the cost of the No. Negros Geothermal Power Projects and intends to apply the proceeds of this loan to payments under the contract for the **SUPPLY AND DELIVERY of 5 Pcs. - 21-1/4" x 13-5/8" x 2,000# API Expansion Spools (FGC 21301) and 5 Pcs. - 12" x 600S Expanding Gate Valves (FGC 21304).** Disbursement of an ODA Loan by JBIC will be subject, in all respects, to the terms and conditions of the Loan Agreement, including the disbursement procedures and the "Guidelines for Procurement under JBIC ODA Loans". No party other than PNOC-EDC shall derive any rights from the Loan Agreement or have any claim to loan proceeds. The above Loan Agreement will cover only a part of the project cost. As for the remaining portion, PNOC-EDC will take appropriate measures for finance.
2. JBIC requires that bidders and contractors, as well as PNOC-EDC, under contracts funded with JBIC ODA Loans and other Japanese ODA, observe the highest standard of ethics during the procurement and execution of such contracts. In pursuance of this policy, JBIC:
   a) will reject a proposal for award if it determines that the bidder recommended for award has engaged in corrupt or fraudulent practices in competing for the contract in question;
   b) will recognize a contractor as ineligible, for a period determined by JBIC, to be awarded a contract funded by JBIC ODA Loans if it at any times determines that the contractor has engaged in corrupt or fraudulent practice in competing for, or in executing, another contract funded with JBIC ODA Loans or other Japanese ODA.
3. PNOC-EDC now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders from eligible source countries for the supply of the Goods for the purpose of the Project.
4. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information on the bid form and inspect the bidding documents at the office of Purchasing Division c/o Mr. Luis Alejandro L. Joson, PNOC-Energy Development Corporation, PNPC Complex, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, 1201 Makati City, Tel. No. (632) 893-1320 Loc. 5279, Fax No. (632) 840-1834.
5. A complete set of bidding documents may be secured by any interested eligible bidder starting **March 18, 2002**, upon payment of a non-refundable fee of one hundred pesos (PHP 100.00) Philippine Currency.
6. For purposes of clarifying matters, a pre-bidding conference shall be held on **April 11, 2002** at 2:00 p.m. at the above address.
7. The estimated date of award is on **May 30, 2002.**
8. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security in the amount indicated in the tender documents, and in the form acceptable to PNOC-EDC. The bids must be delivered to the above address on or before 2:00 p.m. of May 10, 2002. Public opening of bids shall follow immediately thereafter. Late bids shall not be accepted.
9. PNOC-EDC will not be responsible for any costs or expenses incurred by bidders in connection with the preparation or delivery of bids.
10. PNOC-EDC reserves the right to accept or reject any bid and to annul the bidding process and to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality in the bids received and to accept such bid which is most advantageous to PNOC-EDC without thereby incurring liability to the affected bidder or bidders or any obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the ground for PNOC-EDC's action.

(Sgd.) **SERGIO A. F. APOSTOL**
Chairman / President / CEO

(PDI - March 20 2002)

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OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
NATIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY

March 18, 2002

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

The National Housing Authority is inviting interested parties to pre-qualify and to bid for the Strength Evaluation of the President Macapagal (Fort Bonifacio) Tenement located at Taguig, Metro Manila.

Interested parties must be a structural engineering consultant/firm specializing in structural investigation/evaluation of existing concrete structures and knowledgeable in the analytical investigation Method of strength evaluation as prescribed in the National Structural Code of the Philippines (NSCP).

SCOPE OF WORKS:

1. Conduct thorough field investigation as to the dimensions and details of members, properties of materials and other pertinent conditions of the 7-storey tenement and the two (2) connecting ramps.
2. Undertake foundation investigation in accordance with Sections 7.5.1 to 7.5.6 of the NSCP.
3. Prepare as-built plan of the building in terms of structural, architectural, electrical and sanitary details.
4. Prepare and submit rehabilitation plans.

Prequalification Statement Forms will be issued to interested parties upon submission of two (2) copies of the letter of intent and company profile addressed to: The Chairman, Project Evaluation Committee (PEC) from March 21 Arpil 5, 2002. Pre-C Forms, as well as other information are available at the Office of the PEC Secretariat, 2nd Floor, NHA Main Building, Diliman, Quezon City. Interested parties may contact the PEC Secretariat at telephone Nos. 926-5616 and 926-45-61 to 65 local 262 for additional information. Deadline of submission of accomplished Pre-C Statements is on April 12, 2002.

Pre-qualified parties shall be issued Terms of Reference, location plan upon payment of non-refundable fee of P600.00 and are required to visit the building prior to preparation of their proposals. They shall be invited to attend a Pre-Bid Conference, the schedule of which shall be relayed through a bid bulletin.

NHA reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive formally any minor defect thereon, and accept the offer most advantageous to the Government without assuming any obligations for any expenses or losses that may be incurred by the parties.

(Sgd.) **JOSEPH PETER S. SISON**
Assistant General Manager
Chairman, Project Evaluation Committee

(PDI--Mar. 20, 2002)

People, Events & Products

NCWP recognizes outstanding women

IN A FITTING conclusion to the celebration of the National Women's Month, the National Council of Women of the Philippines (NCWP), the umbrella organization of 252 women NGOs with local councils nationwide, is holding a recognition day for outstanding women in the fields of economic empowerment, good governance and human rights on March 21 at the NCWP women's development center, Naia Road, Pasay City.

NCWP was founded in 1946 by pioneering women leaders and suffragists led by Francisca Tirona Benitez—women widely recognized to have started the women's movement in the Philippines. Continuing their founding leaders' legacy and inspiring the Filipino women to be continuously vigilant in protecting the advances they have made and in ever-pushing forward their agenda towards a gender-equal society, NCWP, under the leadership of commissioner Myrna T. Yao and chaired by vice president for NCR lawyer Amy Wong, is holding the recognition day to give tribute to women leaders/advocates who have painstakingly dedicated their lives for the advancement of women.

Wong explains that it is only proper to give due recognition to women who dared to cross personal, social, political, religious and cultural borders into the uncharted territory gender-balanced governance and new frontiers of human rights.

The recognition day is sponsored by the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office and the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp.

SPLASH ISLAND REOPENING
Jaime V. Borromeo, president of Helm Public Affairs Inc. (HPAI), and Robert John L. Sobrepeña, chair of the Fil-Estate Ecocentrum Corp. (FEEC), led the inauguration and reopening rites of Splash Island Resort recently in Biñan, Laguna. According to Borromeo, Splash Island, now managed and operated by HPAI, will regularly operate every summer from March 1 to June 30. Also shown are Biñan barangay captain Armando Reopiro, representatives of Mayor Hermis Perez, Fil-Estate Ecocentrum Corp. chief operating officer Rafael Perez de Tagle, Manila Southwoods' general manager Tito Avanceña, and Sto. Niño de Cebu Parish's Rev. Polotan.

RP as a retirement destination

FOR THE PAST 15 years, the government has been trying to position the Philippines into a retirement destination of the aging population of Japan, Taiwan, South Korea, Europe and the Overseas Filipinos. The School of Economics of the University of Asia and the Pacific (UA&P) invites all real estate developers, property owners, retirees and balikbayans, and local government units to a special briefing on the retirement industry entitled "The Philippines as a Retirement Haven: Opportunities, Barriers and Strategies" on March 21, 1:30 to 5 p.m. at the PLDT Hall of the UA&P, Pearl Drive, Ortigas Complex, Pasig City. This briefing will serve as venue for discussing demographic and income trends, competition in the global retirement industry, overcoming barriers to retirement projects, perspective of a Japanese retiree, and strategic directions for the retirement industry. For reservations call 637-8505, 637-8538 or (telefax) 631-1305 and look for Lanie B. Reyes or Anna Marie P. Rodolfo, or e-mail lreyes@uap.edu.ph.

Dumex officer exhorts kids to join search for champions

EUGENE GO, Dumex group product manager, recently went on television to enjoin kids to participate in the "Dumex Search for Fitter, Brighter Champions".

Go explained that the contest is for young and active children aged 1 to 3 (toddlers) and 4 to 6 (pre-schoolers) who drink Dumex growing up milk products, notably Dumex 1Plus and Dumex 3Plus.

The project was conceived by Dumex, the latest player in the Philippines' infant and child nutrition market and Mercury Drug Corp., the country's leading drugstore chain with the objective of acknowledging and rewarding loyal consumers of Dumex milk products.

According to Go, "mothers can enlist their children by simply enclosing in an envelope proofs of purchase of Dumex growing-up milk products from Mercury Drug stores worth P500 together with two album-size color photographs of the child with requested information written at the back. Place in drop boxes located at participating Mercury Drug branches in Metro Manila, Bulacan, Cavite, Laguna and Rizal. Promo posters and leaflets are found at participating Mercury Drug outlets.

The promo began July 2001 and ends in June 2002. The search is divided into four quarters. During the quarterly finals, the participants are assessed based on physical, mental and social development milestones expected from their respective ages. Instead of a stage, a classroom setting is used. The children participate in fun and exciting games that are designed to hone a child's physical, mental and social skills. The children enjoy the activities and each other's company so much they become unmindful of the judges evaluating them from afar.

Quarterly champions will each receive over P40,000 worth of prizes that include educational materials and Dumex milk products, while each finalist will bring home over P5,000 worth of Dumex milk products and Mercury Drug gift checks.

The next quarterly search is in April 2002, and this covers all entries from the period January to March 2002.

BITS & Clips

Seminar, consultation on immigration

SABLOAK Canada Inc. and its affiliate Sabloak Philippines will hold a seminar and consultation on immigration this Saturday, March 23. The seminar will be held at 9 a.m. at Max's Restaurant, Greenbelt Park, Ayala Center, Makati City. Call 840-2847/0916-8409404, or 0919-6359004 for reservations and further inquiries. Visit the Sabloak office at 1516 Herrera Towers, Herrera Street, Makati City. The seminar fee is P350. Sabloak president Merlins Chen, through his worldwide network, has been providing immigration services for 12 years. The seminar discusses living conditions in Canada, job opportunities, immigration policies and qualifications for permanent residency.

Hemophilia handbook launched

THE DIVISION of Rehabilitation Medicine of the University of Santo Tomas Hospital, in cooperation with The National Hemophilia Center, will launch "The Hemophilia Exercise Handbook." This is an illustrated manual for joint care that can be easily implemented among hemophiliacs and their families as a means of improving the quality of life. The handbook will be launched on March 23 at the St. Martin de Porres Building, after the seminar on "Muscoloskeletal Evaluation on Hemophilic Arthropathy" to be given by Jane Elizabeth Padkin, a physiotherapist from London. Cocktails will follow. For inquiries, call 731-3001 local 2432.

STC midlife crisis seminar

THE HIGH School Class '78 of St. Theresa's College, Quezon City, will hold a midlife crisis seminar entitled "Midlife? No Way…I'm Too Young!" on Saturday, March 23, at the ISEW Room, John Pollock Renewal Center, Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights, Quezon City. Registration starts at 7:30 a.m. Guest speaker will be Sr. Lourdes Dizon, provincial superior of the Carmelite Missionaries of the Philippines. For details, call 371-0645 (Bessie Rivera), or 364-8069 (Ditas Martelino).

GMA adviser at Northwestern meeting

NORTHWESTERN alumna Gloria TanClimaco, MBA '82, now Presidential Adviser for Specific Projects, will be the guest of honor and speaker at the March 21 (Thursday) meeting of the Northwestern Alumni Club at the East Room, Manila Golf Club at 12 noon, according to Club president Dennis O. Valdes. TanClimaco, former chair of SGV & Co, president of Crown Equities and director of Equitable PCI-Bank, will discuss her role in reviewing certain controversial government contracts and recommending renegotiations when deemed necessary.

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RAMON ROSALES ECHAUS

Peacefully joined his Creator on March 16, 2002 at the age of 81.

His bereaved wife **Gilda Macaraig Echaus**; his children **Raymund, Maria Gilda** and **Marguerite**; his grandchildren **Naomi** and **Kimberly**; his brothers **Romeo** and **Roberto**; his sisters **Luisa** and **Letty**; nephews, nieces, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Charity Chapel, St. John Bosco Parish, Pasay Road, Makati City.

Interment will be on Thursday, March 21, 2002 at Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, immediately after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at St. John Bosco Parish.

DR. EPHRAIM SANCHEZ MORAL

Husband of **Dra. Andrea Naguiat Moral** (deceased)

of Porac, Pampanga and residing in Daly City, California, U.S.A.
University of the Philippines, College of Medicine, Class of 1944

retired Ophthalmologist, San Miguel Corporation and Development Bank of the Philippines

Passed away on March 8, 2002 at the age of 81 in Springfield, Illinois, U.S.A.

He is survived by his loving children and their spouses **Joel**, **Rene**, **Raul** (**Rolly**), **Alex** and **Laura**, **Nora** and **Pom**; and his grandchildren **J. Margaret**, **J. Alec**, **J. Michael**, **Vincent Brian**, **Angel Andrea**, **Christina** (**Chrissie**), **Francesca** (**Chesi**), **Brent Michael**, **Colin Alexander**, **Ethan Andrew**, and **Matthew**.

His remains will lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapel in Marikina City on March 21 & 22, 2002 from 9:00 AM to 12:00 Midnight.

Interment will be on March 23, 2002 at 3:00 p.m. at the Loyola Memorial Park in Marikina City.

Please pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

Announcing with deep sorrow
the passing away of

Mr. Fidel R. Carranza Jr.

who died on 15 March 2002 at 2:30 p.m.
in Antipolo City at the age of 71.

His remains now lie in state in Christ the King Church, Green Meadows, Quezon City.

The cremation will be held at Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City on 20 March 2002 after the 12 noon Funeral Mass.

His ashes thereafter shall be brought to Homesite Chapel at PHHC, Bacolod City for his final resting place.

ELI ALVAREZ SAISON

Peacefully joined our Lord on March 19, 2002
at the age of 62.

His loving wife **KASHMIR SAISON**; children **ELHMIR & TINA, KASHLI & MARY ROSE, ELI JOHN, ELLA MAY, LK & CLINT, MIREL, MIRA & OM**; grandchildren **CRISZEL, NATALIE, AUBREY, LUIS, KARL MATHEW.**

Relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Magallanes Chapel (South Superhighway) Makati City.

Funeral Mass shall be on March 25, 2002 at 7:00 a.m. at the Magallanes Chapel, Makati City. Followed by cremation services at 10:00 a.m. at the Manila Memorial Park-Crematory, Sucat Road, Parañaque City.

The Tamayo Clan of Laoag, Ilocos Norte
announces with deep sorrow the passing away of

ENGR. ROLANDO "BOSS" H. TAMAYO

Retired District Engineer of DPWH-INED I
and former President of District and City Engineers
League of the Philippines, who died on 17 March 2002
at the age of 65.

His remains lie in state in his farm in Brgy. 10 Apatot Lubong, Pinili, Ilocos Norte and will be brought to the Family House at #26 Agosto St., Brgy. 4, Laoag City on 24 March 2002.

Interment is on Holy Wednesday, 27 March 2002
at 3 p.m.

The family of the late

RAMON V. MITRA

request for prayers for the repose of his soul on his Second Death Anniversary, March 20, 2002.

Masses will be said on the following churches:

1) **Sta. Maria della Strada** .... 6:00 PM
Katipunan, Quezon City
2) **Parish of the Holy Sacrifice** .... 6:00 PM
U.P. Quezon City
3) **St. Peter Parish** .... 6:00 PM
Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City
4) **St. Benedictine College** .... 6:30 PM
B.F. Homes, Las Piñas
5) **Resurrection Parish** .... 6:30 PM
Phase I, BF Homes, Las Piñas
6) **Immaculate Conception Cathedral** ...... 7:00 AM
Puerto Princesa City
7) **Sta. Monica Parish** .... 7:00 AM
Puerto Princesa City
8) **San Miguel Parish** .... 6:30 AM
Puerto Princesa City
9) **Santuario de San Jose** .... 6:15 PM
Greenhills, Metro Manila
10) **Society of the Divine Word** .... 6:00 PM
Scout Ybardolaza Street,
Kamuning, Quezon City
11) **St. Paul the Apostle** .... 6:00 PM
Mother Ignacia corner Timog,
Quezon City
12) **Mary the Queen** .... 6:00 PM
Greenhills, Metro Manila
13) **Mt. Carmel Shrine** .... 6:00 PM
New Manila, Quezon City
14) **Christ the King** .... 6:30 AM
White Plains, Quezon City

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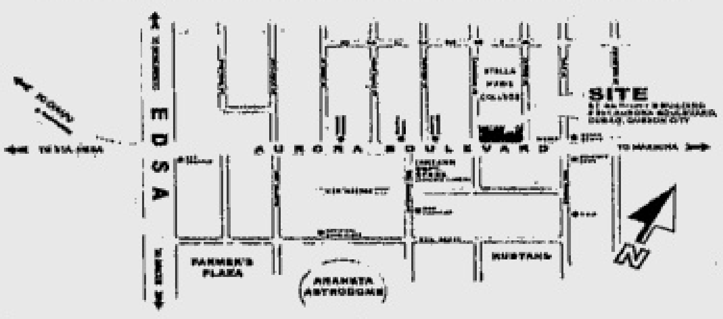

"My soul finds rest to God alone;
from Him comes my salvation."
Psalms 62:2

Our Dearly Beloved

ATTY. JUSTA SINGSON BATOON

Died in the Grace of our Lord on March 18, 2002
at the age of 74.

She is survived by her husband **Gaudioso S. Batoon**, their five daughters **Jocelyn, Gwendolyn, Judith, Genevieve** and **Geraldine**, their families and her sister **Irene S. Siahaya.**

Her remains lie in state at the Philam Chapel of the Sta. Rita Parish Church in PHILAM Homes, Quezon City.

Interment shall be on Saturday, March 23, 2002 at 12:00 noon at the Himlayang Pilipino Memorial Park, Tandang Sora, QC after the 10:00 A.M. Funeral Mass at the Philam Chapel, Philam Homes, Quezon City.

The family thanks all the relatives and friends for their heartfelt continued prayers for the eternal and peaceful repose of her soul.

"...absent with the body to be present with the Lord."
2 Corinthians 5:8

Our Beloved Nanay

VALENTINA SONGCO DIMALANTA

of Puerto Princesa City
Peacefully joined her Creator on March 15, 2002
at the age of 79.

Her brother **Ignacio**; her children **Mely** and **Jun, Tony** and **Flor, Noy** and **Tess, Sis. Zeny, Dahl** and **Chito, Beng** and **Mike, Cong** and **Pocholo;** grandchildren, great grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Holy Cross Chapel, San Miguel Parish, Puerto Princesa City.

Interment will be on Saturday, March 23, 2002 at the Puerto Princesa Memorial Park after the 1:00 pm Mass.

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Effective conflict resolution is situational

By Josie O. Santamaria

(This is Part II of How to transform work wars into company triumphs.)

WHICH style do you often use when you are in a conflict situation? There are several styles of resolving conflicts. These are competing, accommodating, avoiding, compromising and collaborating. While it is quite obvious that collaboration is the best style, it may not work in certain situations where the other styles could be useful.

Different styles

A person with a win-lose mentality uses the competing style. He pulls his rank, uses economic sanctions, or makes threats, usually using his verbal skills to get his way. Some writers say that the competing style may be the only alternative in emergency situations or when the situation is a matter of survival or when the likelihood of winning is favorable and the stakes are worth the struggle. However, its adverse effects can be substantial. The person "wins the battle but loses the war" because he undermines trust and does not get the cooperation and commitment of the "loser" and those who sympathize with the latter.

The person with a lose-win mentality employs an accommodating or "smoothing over" style. He sacrifices his interests and sets aside his own concerns to satisfy the needs and interests of the other person. The manager who ended up doing the task of his supervisor who had refused to do overtime is an example of the use of the accommodating style.

The accommodating style takes the form of selfless generosity or charity, obeying another person's order even if he prefers not to, or yielding to another person's wishes or point of view. Important issues are suppressed and solutions may be temporary. The accommodating style, however, may be appropriate when time is limited, or when the need for cooperation is high, or when the issues are surface or are due to misunderstandings that may dissolve with smoothing efforts.

The person with a lose-lose mentality uses the avoiding style. He hopes that the problem will go away if he will "do nothing" about it or the problem will just "resolve itself." So the person usually withdraws, goes away, or does not talk about the issue. "Let's not fight. We're family here" or "Nice people don't fight," or "Let's get out for a round of drinks and forget about this" are typical statements of the person who uses the avoiding style. During meetings when discussion on issues crop up, he diplomatically sidesteps or postpones the issue for discussion.

Avoiding conflict

The president who allowed his two equally competent managers to decide who would give in to the other, was using the avoiding style. He neither pursued his own or his managers' concerns; in fact, he did not address the conflict at all. Another example was an HR director who was mollifying a retiree who had raised an issue about the company car he had been using for five years. The HR director said, "Don't raise the issue anymore. Anyway, you can be sure we can give some projects for you to do in the future." The retiree relented but he never got any special projects from the company.

No respect

When a manager has the reputation of using the avoiding style, he does not get the respect of his peers nor of his subordinates. The avoiding style may be appropriate when the conflict is minor such that the other party forgets about it or when there are no options available for resolving the conflict.

The compromise mode falls in the middle ground between competing and accommodating. The person who uses the compromise style tries to find some expedient, mutually acceptable solution that satisfies both parties. Compromising might mean splitting differences, exchanging concessions, or seeking quick middle-ground positions. "You give up something and we'll give up something, too." Or "Let's meet halfway."

The use of compromise usually results in low quality decisions. Bad feelings between the parties may linger with the realization that "*Naisahan ako*" ("They put one over me"). One or both parties may blow up or inflate his position so that he does not lose much when asked to give up "a little."

The best conflict resolution style is collaboration because both parties with different viewpoints or opposing interests, explore creative ways by which both their concerns are fully satisfied. They explore their differences to learn from each other and are open to surface their respective needs behind their divergent positions. Once uncovered, they then invest their energy in a creative solution to the conflict. Admittedly, this process is time-consuming and may be costly, but both parties are committed to the decision they make. There are no winners and losers. In the use of collaboration, both parties agree to set aside their differences while they pursue a win-win solution.

Mediator

These are other ways by which people in the workplace resolve conflicts. Also quite common is referring the conflict to a third party, usually the boss or a senior guy, whom both protagonists recognize and respect. Sometimes this helps if this third party is skilled in mediation and is perceived as objective. However, the third party may intensify the conflict if he has ulterior motives that bias resolution in favor of one of the protagonists. The other party may feel aggrieved that favoritism was used to favor the other. Also, ownership for the solution is the boss'. There is no commitment from both protagonists. The use of this style, however, is appropriate in emergency situations and when the collaboration style is not feasible.

Collaboration is the best way of handling conflict in situations where long-term positive relationships between the protagonists is required. In business organizations, this kind of relationship is now the norm rather than the exception.

To use this method, at least one of the protagonists must meet at least three basic prerequisites: first, a win-win attitude which is based on a positive self-image; second, he has self-control or self-discipline; and the third, he has communication skills. He can then influence the other party when he takes the lead in guiding their interaction towards a positive constructive resolution.

A proactive person recognizes that he has no control over the other person. Neither should he even attempt to change the other person. The only one he has control of is himself: his perception of the situation, his emotions, his feelings and his reactions. With this mindset, he might even influence the other person to do the same.

When a person has a win-win mentality, he respects the other person. He recognizes that this person has certain things at stake, too, just as he has; that the other person has needs, values, interests, personality and convictions which are different from his. This respect for the person will lead him to have a different perception which, in turn, will lead him to control his emotions. He avoids judgmental, derogatory, demeaning and insulting language.

(Next week: Part III on Successful Collaboration)

(Ms Santamaria is a consultant specializing in career development, organization development and HRD. She and her husband Jorge manage Career Systems, Inc,. a consulting and training organization. For questions and comments, she can be contacted thru e-mail carsys@qinet.net.)

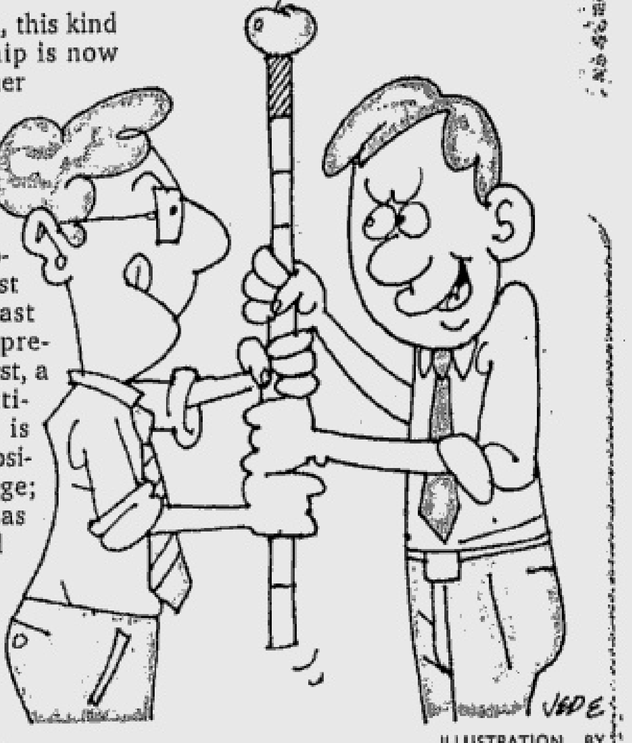


ILLUSTRATION BY JED ESTRADA

A summer leaf for a working mom

WORKING MOM

An Mercado Alcantara

SUMMER arrived this weekend, spiking the noontime temperatures and forcing trees and vines to shed off their leaves in preparation for the flowers of May. In our hometown last Sunday, we sat in my aunt's balcony and watched as the summer paraded in, welcomed by confetti bursts of red, yellow, and amber leaves swirling in the warm wind and laying out a thick crunchy carpet of still more red, yellow, and amber.

Chasing leaves

Because summers make me feel like a kid again, I ran out into the lawn to clap and cheer at every burst of leaves the wind brought on. I stood under three giant mahogany trees, each of them about 40 years old, chasing after the leaves that fell from their venerable branches. My five-year-old nephew Angelo joined me in my game, challenging me to be the first to catch a leaf in flight. Eager to have a souvenir of the changing seasons, I zigzagged across the lawn in sprints and dashes with my arms thrusting out at my leaves of prey. It was not easy. My middle-aged sprints were not as swift as I imagined, and the leaves swirled quicker than my hands could get at them.

Seeing Angelo zipping about in top speed triggered my competitive streak. I counted on my height to compensate for my less than agile movements. I also shrieked louder at the start of every chase, hoping to distract him. But we dashed about in circles to no avail. After about the fifth run-about, Angelo came to me with a seedpod shaped like a boat. He picked it up from the ocean of leaves on the lawn. He left the boat at my feet as I continued to wait for the next wind burst. Angelo came back with two more boats. He was changing the rules of the game, I realized. He didn't want to look up anymore. He found more treasures on the ground. Ah, the wisdom of a five-year-old. This was so like Angelo.

With no more wind and will in me to make another dash, I simply looked up when the next gust of wind came. I stood still watching the leaves blow by, brushing my head, caressing my shoulders, and teasing my back. And then I saw it. Out of all the leaves falling around me, there was one falling straight my way, at just the right lazy pace. I stretched out my hand, opened my palm, and there it landed. The leaf meant just for me. My souvenir of a changing season.

Mindless chases

I am keeping the leaf in my date book as a place marker and a reminder. As working moms, we get caught up in mindless chases. We make the mistake of running around in a frenzy, cramming our schedules with sprints and dashes that don't get us anywhere. Or sometimes, in a panic, we look at the competition (the officemate who is getting the promotion, our sister who is getting our mother's attention, or that mom whose kids are all so well-behaved), instead of looking within ourselves to find our own treasures just lying about.

If we are to be effective working moms, we will need the discipline to know when it is time to pull back from the race, gather our resources, and check our strategies. Maybe we're thrusting our fists when all we should be doing is opening our hand. Our lives cannot be about the chase—neither for that promotion nor for our own children's attention. We have to keep still to make sense of the changing seasons, make sense of our balancing acts, and wait for that one moment of magic when, even though all around us seems to be falling apart, our new leaf will find us. We'll get our break—whether it is a solution to our career problem or a breakthrough in our family relationship. Like magic, we'll be able to pluck it out of thin air and know that it is meant just for us.

We'd love to hear about your own working mom summer stories. Write to me at *workingmom@pinoycentral.com.*

(An Mercado-Alcantara is editor-in-chief of the magazine Metro Working Mom *published monthly by ABS-CBN Publishing.)*

'I survived...'

(From page B12)

Like most Chinese-Filipino families, we worked where we lived and at times, we had to endure the stench of rotten oranges and potatoes filling our two-storey apartment.

By the early 50s, we were importing cigarettes and whiskey as well.

Changing strategies

Business was good. But two factors made me change strategies again. First, I saw that trading would in time become a low-margin business because we were at the mercy of our suppliers and buyers. Second, I saw that the government was working on import-substitution policies to encourage local business. President Quirino wanted to shore up the country's foreign exchange reserves that had been depleted as a result of the high importation of the post-war years.

So I decided to enter the AGE of MANUFACTURING. In 1957, I started a corn milling plant producing glucose and cornstarch. Why cornstarch? Because I thought—and it turned out, correctly—that the unglamorous cornstarch would be in great demand from better-known businesses like textiles, paper, ice cream, pharmaceuticals and beer.

But there was one problem: I needed capital. This was not easy. I was 30, had no big company success to back me up, and I didn't know any bankers.

Thankfully, Dr. Albino Sycip, then chair of China Bank, and DK Chiong, then president, gave me a clean loan of P500,000 to start my business. He would be asked later why he did that and he said something about knowing a good man when he saw one (maybe he knew something I didn't.) Anyway, from there, Universal Corn Products, the predecessor of Universal Robina Corporation, was born.

Of course, the bigger cornstarch players did not give us an easy time. They engaged us in a price war. That is a nice way of saying they tried to kill us by selling low. But we prevailed and started to get clients like San Miguel Corporation.

Tough competition

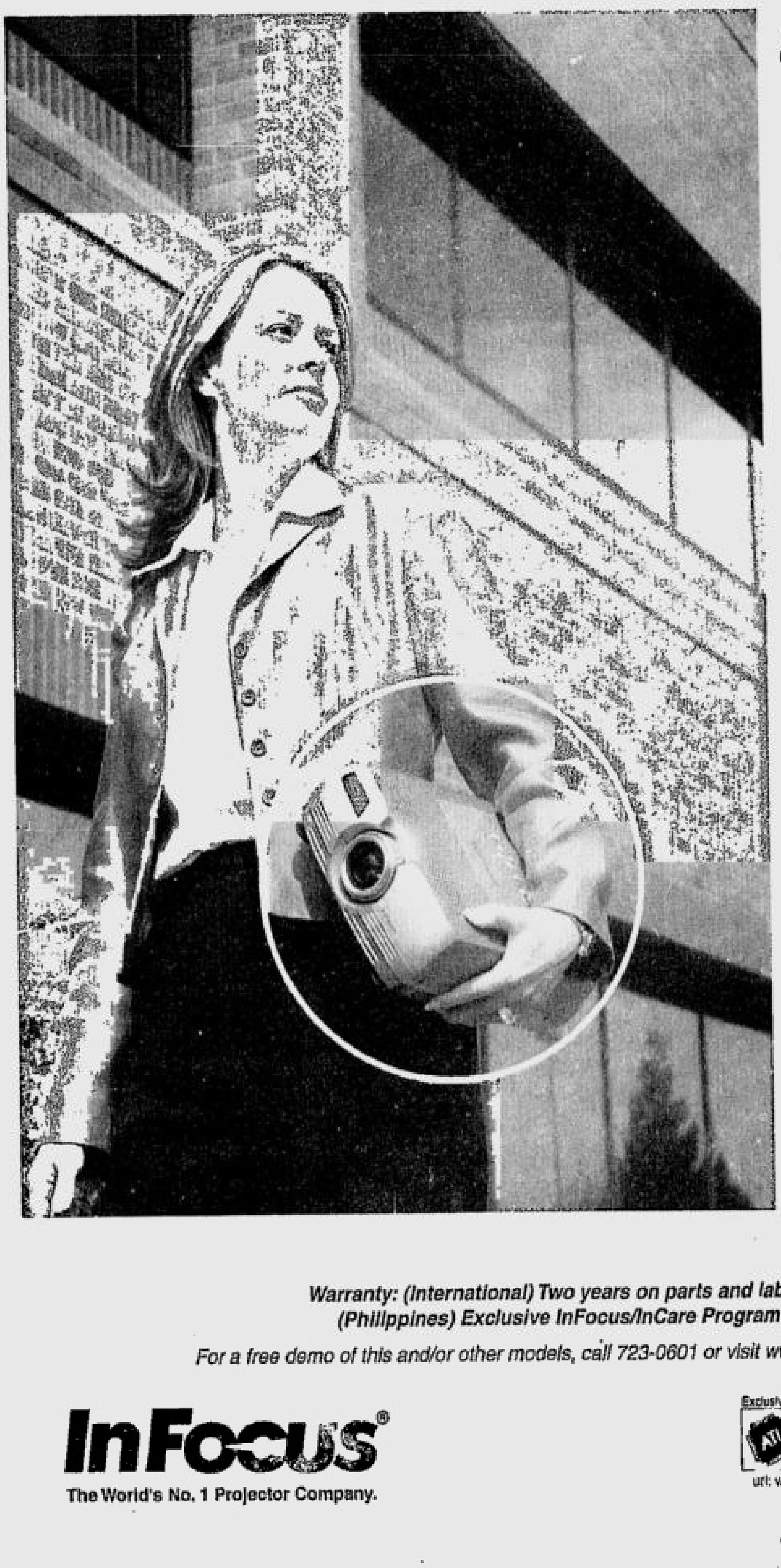
It was my first real taste of competition. And I liked it. I think that first experience prepared me for bigger tougher competitors in my future.

By 1961, cornstarch was becoming a commodity and I saw that there was no future in a business where we had to keep lowering margins to survive.

It was time to get into a bigger, and riskier, game played by big multinationals like Procter & Gamble and Nestlé. I saw that all they did to capture the market was to brand their products, for instance their coffee and their toothpaste. That is, give their coffee and toothpaste a name, a face and an image that customers would instantly recognize and identify with quality. Me, I dreamt that one day I would be the Philippine Nestlé or General Foods. So the Manufacturing Age for me was giving way to the AGE of BRANDS.

(To be continued next week: A tale of expansion, thoughts on globalization)

(Send feedback to rreyes@inquirer.com.ph*)*



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PEOPLE at WORK

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A TAIPAN'S TALE OF SURVIVAL

'I survived because I recognized change when I saw it'

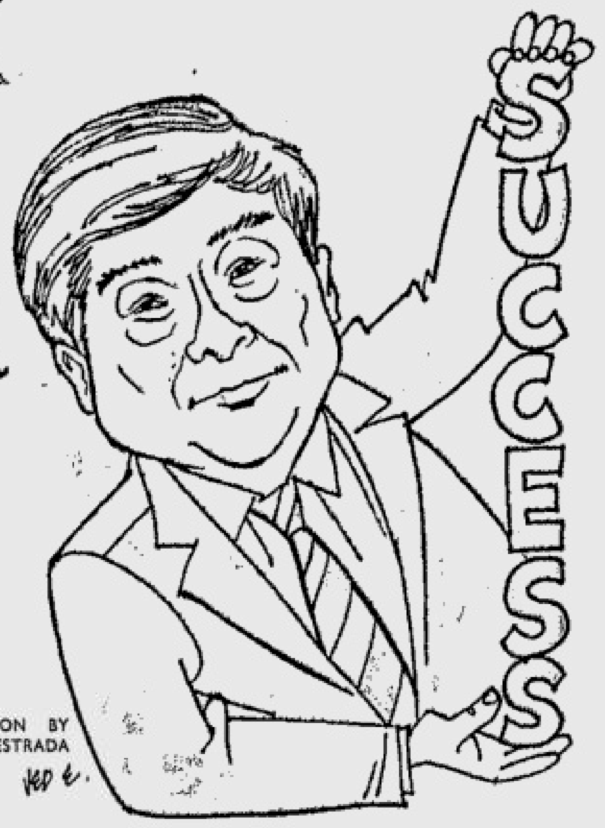

ILLUSTRATION BY JED ESTRADA

POSTCARDS *from the* **CORPORATE EDGE**

By John Gokongwei, Jr.

(THE FOLLOWING article is not exactly a Postcards from the Corporate Edge contribution. It is a speech given by John Gokongwei Jr., the 75-year-old patriarch of the Gokongwei business empire, last Mar. 1, 2002 at the unveiling of the marker for the John Gokongwei School of Management Building of the Ateneo de Manila University. It is also not from the "corporate edge" but rather from the "corporate summit" since obviously Mr. Gokongwei is at the peak of his success as a businessman and is now enjoying his new role as chairman emeritus of the JG Summit Group of 30 corporations which has 30,000 employees. However, it sort of suits this particular portion of People at Work since Postcards is, after all, about people at work sharing their thoughts and feelings, whether they're up or down, so that readers can gain insights that can be applied to their work situations.

This speech has been making the rounds of e-mail users and in fact, I first saw it when PaW columnist Moje Ramos Aquino forwarded a copy to me last week. Upon reading it, I sensed that for people at work in these uncertain times, for graduates entering the daunting world of work, and for people out of work, the story of John Gokongwei, Jr. may perhaps give us a sense that certainly, given the will to succeed, the mechanisms for success and the ways to survive our present difficulties will surely be found.

I believe that a story that provides a glimmer of hope for people fazed by rapid changes in the world deserves to be read by many. So, with the permission of Lisa Gokongwei, here is the speech which shall be published in two parts.—PaW Editor)

I AM John Gokongwei, Jr. I am not an Atenean but I feel at home with you. Today, at least. Sixty-two years ago, I could not have dreamt of appearing before the Jesuits and their students to tell the story of my life. I was no more than a student then at San Carlos University in Cebu, when my father died suddenly. It left me, the eldest, the responsibility of taking care of my mother and five siblings. That was tough for someone who was 13. Creditors had just seized our home and business, and I had no experience with earning a living.

Recognizing change

But here I am—not all on account of my good looks or charming personality—but because I somehow survived. And when I look back, I know now that I did so because I recognized CHANGE when I saw it.

The first change was war. I had turned 15. My mother had already sent my brothers and sister to China where the cost of living was lower. From Cebu, she and I had to make money to send to them.

I turned to peddling. My day began at five in the morning. I would load my bicycle with soap, thread and candles, and then bike to neighboring towns to sell my goods. On market days, I would rent a stall, lay out the goods from the bike, and make about 20 pesos a day, enough for me to survive and to buy even more goods for next time. Those days you might call my BICYCLE AGE.

After two years of biking and peddling, at 17, I entered my BATEL AGE. The *batel* was a small very utilitarian boat that defied the open sea and would take me farther from Cebu and all the way to Lucena, from where I would take a truck to Manila, with companions twice or thrice my age. The sea trips could take two to three weeks depending on the weather, and the land trips another five to six hours. (I was lighter then, you can imagine.)

On the *batel*, I read books like "Gone with the Wind" under the great blue sky to pass away the time—even if we traders were always in fear of sea pirates and the bad weather. Once, our *batel* hit a rock and sank. Thank heavens for my rubber tires!

Those were the goods I had with me to sell in Manila. Well, we all held on to those tires, which meant I saved all those traders and those traders saved all my tires.

Great equalizer

At that time, the war was still going on. Ironically, I look back at the war with the fondest of memories. It was the great equalizer. Almost everyone I knew had lost big and small fortunes at the time. This meant we all started at ground zero. Ground zero.

When the war ended, I was 19. Because of the war, the economy was more dependent than ever on imports. So when I set up Amasia, my first company, it was to import textile remnants, fruit, old newspaper and magazines, and used clothing from the US.

There was a side benefit to this. I would wear some of my own stock, so I would have different clothes to wear when I went courting Elizabeth, the woman who would be my wife. But at the end of it, I made some money.

The Bicycle Age was over. The TRADING AGE began.

By then, my brothers and sister returned from China. Together, we worked in the trading business I had begun—as *bodegeros*, clerks, warehousemen, cashiers and collectors. And all this while they were all still going to school; me, I stopped schooling.

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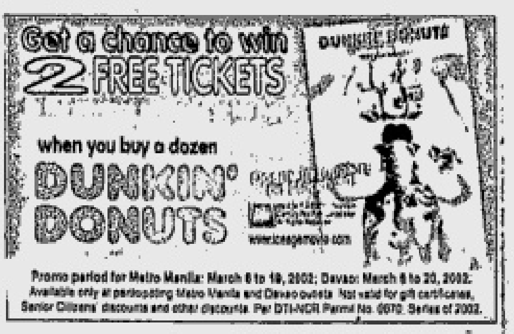
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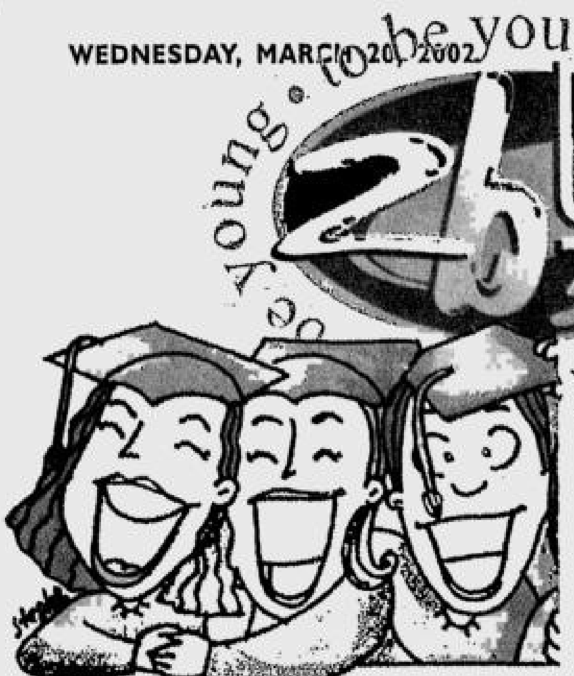
to be young • to be you • to be young • to be you!
2bU!

Goodluck, batch 2002

It's the time of the year when Verdi's graduation march becomes the most requested song and the fashion changes from street hip to academic gowns with silly-looking hats. 2bU! marches with the new graduates, surveying the fun and torture of campus life, the friends they have gained and the lessons they have learned. It's one nostalgic trip with eyes toward the future

Can't wait to get out of high school?

By Catherine Young
2bU! Correspondent

IF you belong to high school Class of 2002, you are most probably rejoicing. No more senioritis, no more meetings and no more getting up at the crack of dawn. You are probably looking forward to entering what you think is a better phase of your life.

But no matter how much you come to love your university, there will still be some things about high school that you will miss, often because they are radically different. Here are some of them:

Decent bathrooms. While I have grown to like my university and all its nooks and crannies, the bathroom is one place I do not enjoy going to. Most toilets do not flush, some faucets do not work, and many of the cubicles do not have locks. But the hilarious and thought-provoking graffiti make the struggle of trying to use the john while holding the door closed more bearable.

Clean air. Being a non-smoker, I usually get headaches when I walk past students who are smoking.

Peace and security. This is not to say that colleges are dangerous, but larger areas are more likely to harbor hidden dangers. In your freshman year in college, you will probably find yourself appreciating the stricter security measures in high school. I have heard of fellow students and even teachers getting held up inside the campus. Many students have even started carrying pepper spray or a can of Mace in their backpacks.

Less stressful schedule. If you thought that stress would be a thing of the past in college, think again. You may not have as many extracurricular activities as before, but classes and tests can leave you really exhausted. Sleeping is, at times, a luxury, especially during finals week (I found out that my Math and Chemistry finals this Saturday would be held 15 minutes apart. Oh joy!).

High school teachers. Woe to the student who, by some divine joke, gets a very controversial professor. In college, your grade sometimes depends on the kind of teacher you have. There will be times when the odds seem to be against you. If terror teachers in high

CAN'T/ p.C5

> No matter how much you come to love your new university, there will still be some things about high school that you will miss

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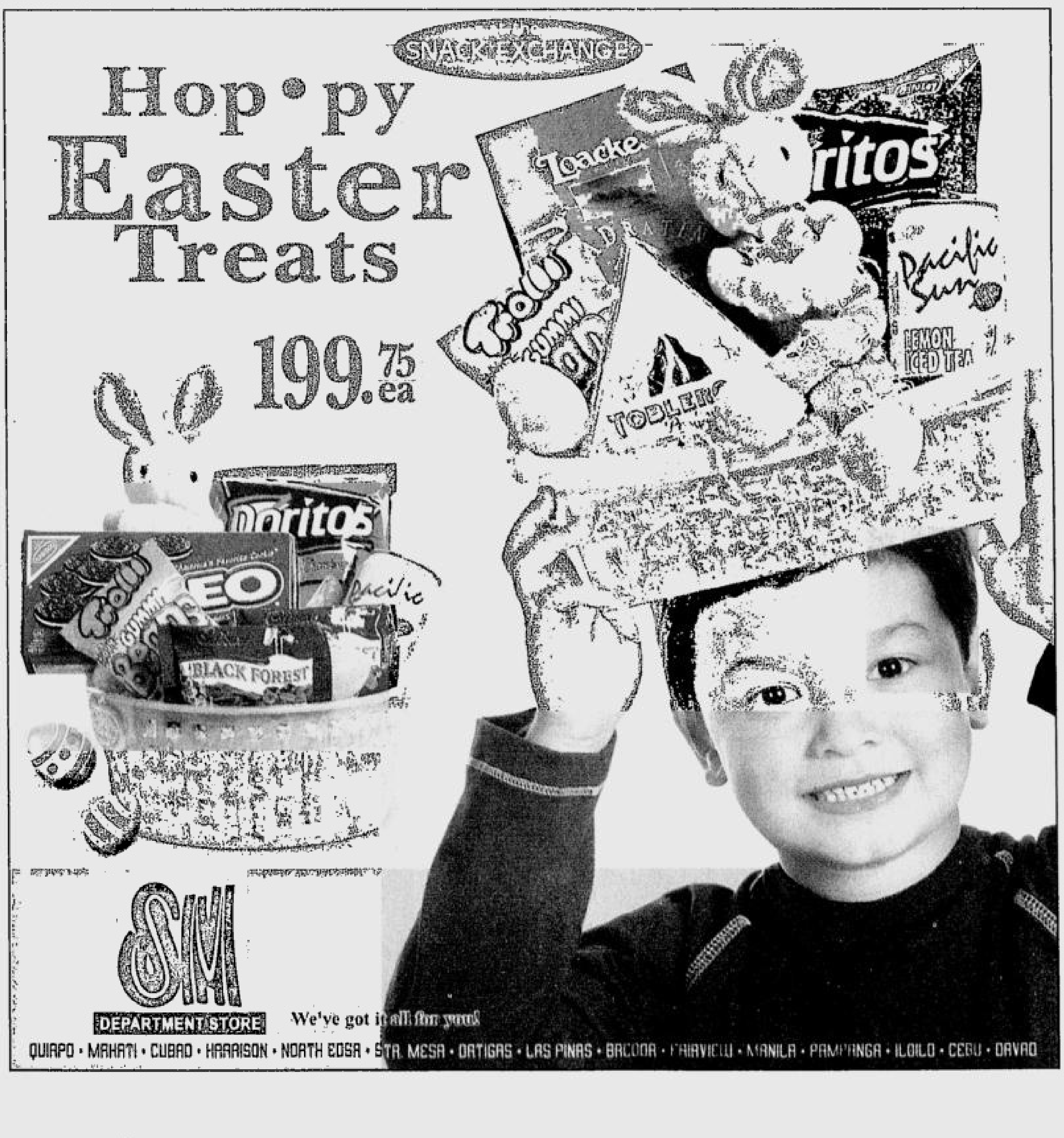
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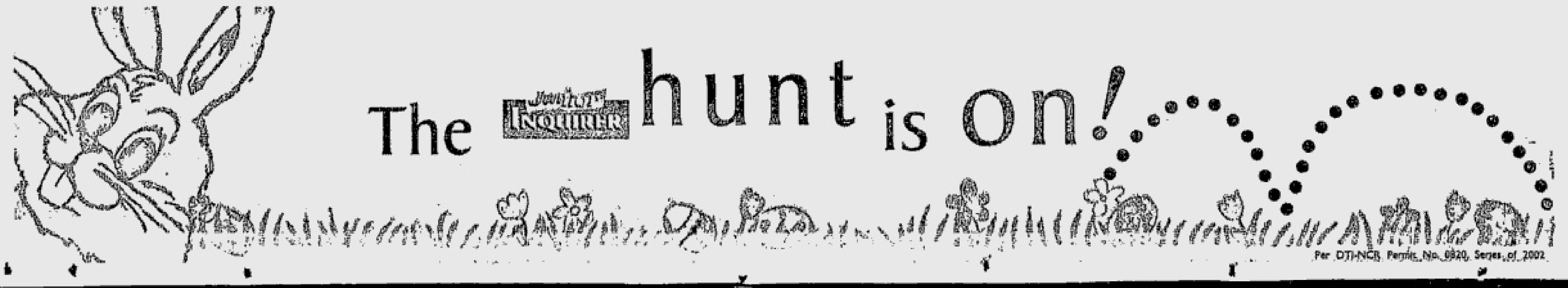
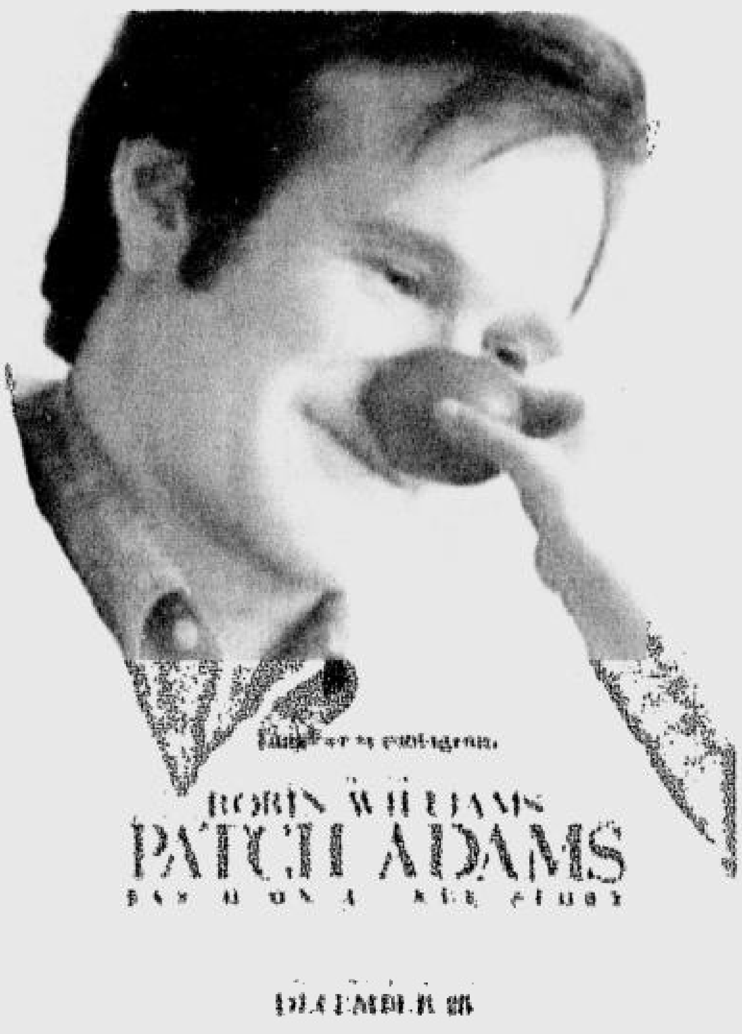

The Junior Inquirer hunt is on!
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0820, Series of 2002

Hats off to Hollywood

By Catherine Young
2bU! Correspondent

THE DAY you finally get your diploma will be one of the best days of your life. It is the culmination of that long, arduous journey you had embarked on, whether you're in high school, college or med school. The acne breakouts and the dark circles under your eyes from all those sleepless nights, the days spent in the library hunting down information from dusty books, the sacrifices you had to make in order to get this far—all these are vindicated once you graduate.

Hollywood is quick to place great importance on this important milestone in one's life. 2bU! remembers some of the memorable graduation movies that show the trials young graduates have to endure before and after the mortarboards have been tossed. Below are some of the top graduates from the silver screen:



It's time to pay tribute to the more memorable graduation movies

'Patch Adams'

This is a great movie for those who want to become doctors someday. Patch Adams (Robin Williams) is a med student who seeks to make a difference in other people's lives after he checks out from a mental institution. The stiffness of the administrators clashes horribly with his cheerful personality and carefree humor, which he uses to heal the hospital's patients. He sets up his own hospital that does not discriminate against the poor or those without the right papers and insurance. Ultimately, he rises against all the odds and gets through medical school. The hilarious Robin Williams has a posterior-exposing scene during his graduation ceremony.

'Reality Bites'

One of the most popular movies about twentysomethings, "Reality Bites" delves into the angst-ridden lives of Lelaina Pierce (Winona Ryder), Troy Dyer (Ethan Hawke) and Vicki Miner (Janeane Garofalo). Lelaina, the college valedictorian, struggles against the crass commercialization in the media while trying to come to terms with her relationship with Troy, an intellectual slacker who spends nights singing in bars. Ben Stiller plays Michael Grates, a yuppie who is part of the crass commercialization that Lelaina tries to fight against. Behind the relationship issues, the movie deals with "life after college" problems, particularly the difficulties of maintaining one's idealism amid the rat race.

'The Graduate'

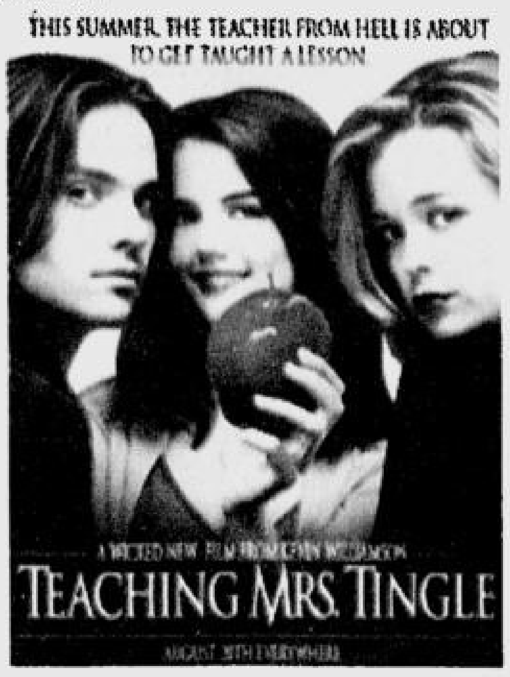
Another post-college movie, "The Graduate" stars Dustin Hoffman as Benjamin Braddock, who, after graduating, goes back to his parents' home, confused as to what he will do with the rest of his life. While he is contemplating his future, his father's business partner, Mrs. Robinson (Anne Bancroft), seduces him. While he's off having trysts with the older woman, he also develops a crush on her daughter Elaine (Katharine Ross). His seeming dilemma hampers his attempt to restore normalcy to his life.

'Teaching Mrs. Tingle'

Leigh Ann Watson (Katie Holmes) is desperate to get an 'A' in History to get a scholarship that would take her out of her small town and to bigger places. The problem lies with her history teacher, Mrs. Tingle (Helen Mirren), who terrorizes her students. Class slacker Luke Churner (Barry Watson), who has a crush on Leigh Ann, steals the history exam for her to get her desired 'A.' Unfortunately, Mrs. Tingle catches her with the test and accuses her of cheating. Leign Ann tries a simple plan to clear her name, but it backfires as Leigh Ann, her friend Jo Lynn (Marisa Coughlan) and Luke end up holding Mrs. Tingle hostage in her own home.

'With Honors'

Brendan Fraser plays Monty, a Harvard student who loses his thesis through a sidewalk grating. The thesis fells into the hands of a homeless guy, Simon (Joe Pesci). Desperate to get his thesis back (as he made only one copy), Monty agrees to trade in food and shelter for every page of the thesis. His friends Everett (Patrick Dempsey) and Courtney (Moira Kelly) help him through this bargaining jam. Aside from the practical lessons the movie offers (make sure you have more than one copy of your thesis), it also emphasizes the importance of friendship, even between the most unlikely of friends.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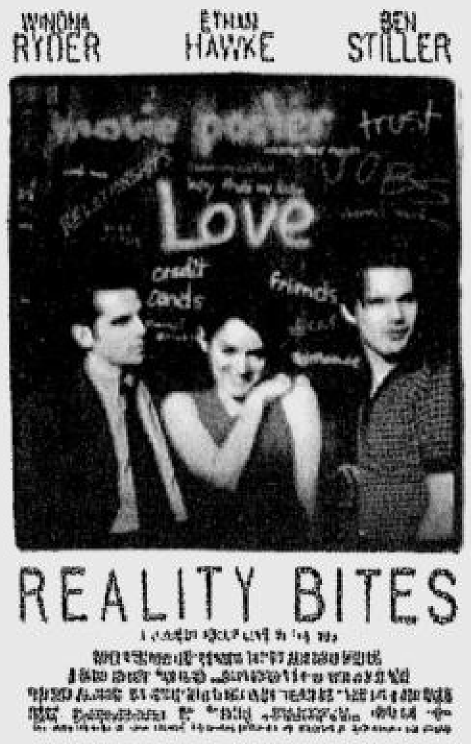

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2bU!'s to-do list before the school year ends

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

By Niño Mark M. Sablan
2bU! Correspondent

WITH THE CONFUSION that the end of a school year usually brings, some things that should be done might get forgotten until it is too late to do something about them.

To help the harassed and distracted (by the anticipation of the long break or an uncertain future after graduation), here's a list of some of the things that ought to be done before the schools close their doors at the end of yet another academic year.

Get contact numbers, addresses, etc. for keeping in touch. Make sure all the "important" people in school are in your phone and address books, especially students who will be transferring or graduating.

Remind and return. Remind all those who borrowed books, albums, clothes, money, etc. to return or pay them back before the school year ends. Make sure that you also return borrowed items, preferably with lots of apologies and thanks.

Make more memories. Gather your friends and take pictures or shoot a video for the last time. Borrow the negatives of old pictures of parties, practices, presentations, etc. and have copies of them made, if you don't have them yet in your albums.

Graduating or not, it would really be admirable if your class could do something worthwhile as a group

Leave a legacy. Graduating or not, it would really be admirable if your class could do something worthwhile as a group. Whether it's throwing a party for your teachers (and inviting all the janitors) or donating books or video cassette discs to your department, make sure it's a fun group effort.

Be generous. Donate old books (and uniforms if possible) to those in the lower grades/years or public schools. You will not only do something kind but have more storage space in your closet/book case.

Appreciate and apologize. Now's the time to express your heartfelt thanks to those who helped you become the person that you are now. The supportive teacher, the understanding classmate, the foe-turned-friend, the schoolmate who lent you money, the guard who let you in even without your ID. Give them a present, a thank-you letter or, better yet, a kiss, a hug or a verbal expression of your gratitude. It is also time to make amends for your faults and reconcile with foes. Forgive and forget the little squabbles that caused rifts in your relationship with friends. Apologize to those you hurt along the way. Summer vacation is so much better when you have a crystal-clear conscience.

Have fun and accomplish something different and fulfilling. Ace an exam. Try to get published in the school paper. Confess to a longtime crush. Just don't do something stupid that will cause you to repeat the whole school year or derail your graduation.

Chase your graduation blues away

By Ma. Angela V. Ignacio
2bU! Correspondent, Ateneo de Manila University

Here are some reasons to stop moping and start looking forward to what lies ahead instead.

- You're one step closer to fulfilling your dream.
- You've made your parents happy.
- You're given a new sense of independence.
- You'll find out who your true friends are.

Time and distance are two major obstacles to keeping friendships strong after graduation. While some *barkadas* do split up eventually, others become stronger than ever because people make the effort to keep the group together.

- You'll meet new people.
- You might meet someone special.

For those who haven't scored in the romance department so far, this may be the lucky break you are waiting for.

- Your graduation gift.

Although getting the diploma should be reward enough.

- You can start a new and different life.

Not everyone had a blast in school. Now you can leave all your rubbish behind and start over with a relatively clean slate.

- More and bigger opportunities await.

As the saying goes, the future is ours for the taking.

- All those years of hard work finally paid off.

Think of all the blood, sweat, tears and God knows what else you invested for this one momentous occasion. Isn't it nice to know it wasn't all in vain?

E-mail the author at aoshi_no_miko@hotmail.com.

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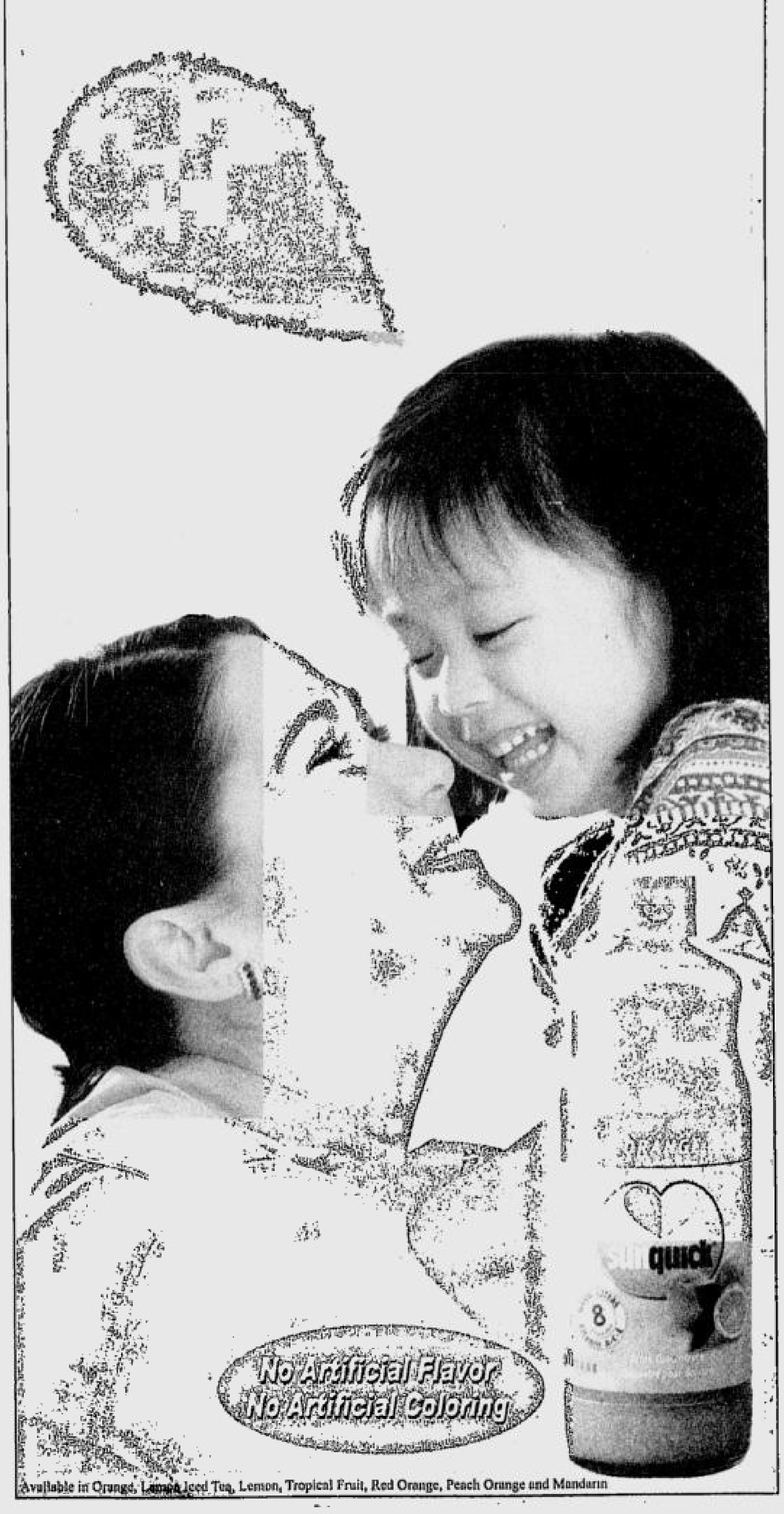

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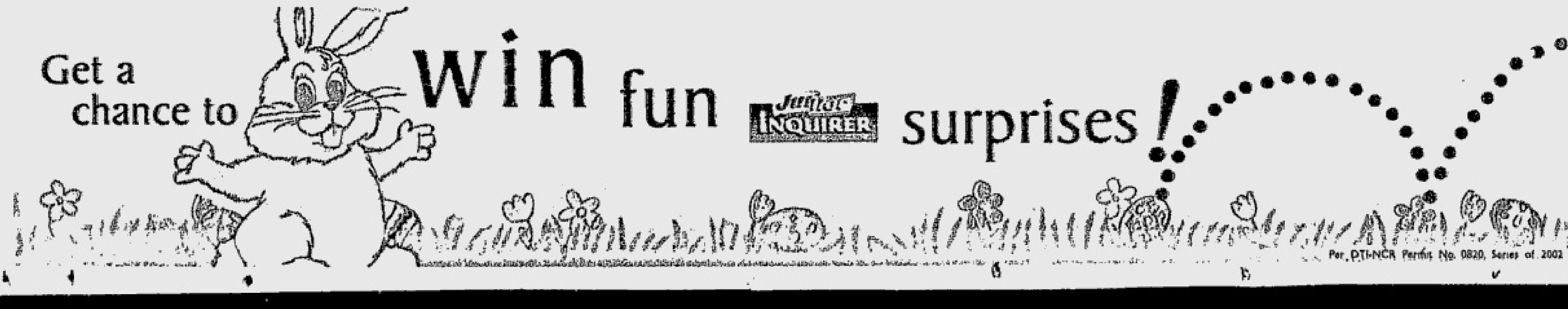

Get a chance to win fun Junior INQUIRER surprises!

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0820, Series of 2002

THE CREW. Big Fish's senior partner Tuck Cheah, Nick Wilwayco, Yaparazzi, Nick Bracegirdle, Celine Lopez and Tina Tinio of NBC

SMART MOVES. Mon Isberto, Chicane, Miles Inocentes and Bong Paderna of MTV, who co-produced the event with Smart

FEATHERED FISH. Ed Aniel and Domini Primero of Big Fish. Take a bow, Doms!

Not just another DJ event

(Part I-Interview with Chicane)

Tim Yap

LAST Saturday, Chicane, a.k.a. Nick Bracegirdle, plus his array of musicians came to our shores to perform in what many scene movers and shakers call the "event to beat"—providing the scene with a benchmark of scintillating sights and sounds. We were able to catch up with him (without sleep, coming straight from the party) before he took his flight back to the UK. Here are some excerpts.

CHILL MODE. Chicane, a.k.a. Nick Bracegirdle

How do you feel about performing in the Philippines as compared to the other countries?

It was one of the best gigs we've done. It was great—it was MAD! It was really good fun, and you know, we'd like to come back and stay longer. It was crazy, it was really good—everyone was really up for it, you know.

So right after your gig, what did you guys do?

Fell over, basically. Ha, ha! We got lost. We were supposed to go to a party at Wherelse? We drove over for about 20 miles, and then we said, "Where are we?" And the driver said, "I don't know, where do you want to go?" So we decided to go back to the hotel. Our whole crew got to the parties.

Where did the name Chicane come from?

Everyone thinks it's about motor racing. We wanted to have a down tempo chill sort of thing, so we listed names and, basically, Chicane was the one that came out, and since then I have really gotten into cars and motor racing, so everyone thinks it's from there. But it isn't, it's just a name that we came up with.

AXE IT UP! Illac Diaz and Dianne Sison rejoicing at the event.

What's the true definition of your sound?

I do so many types of music. I do down tempo, I do club stuff, getting into film work, I've done music for PlayStation games. I'm also a producer and I write for other people so there's too many genres there to call it one whole thing. But there's a slight element of melancholy in the sound and atmosphere. It's been called "wide screen house music" or "cinematic house music" but it's very difficult to put it in one box because I'm doing so many things. I just have a way of working that just so happens to have a sound that everyone recognizes.

From being a DJ, what made you go a step further into live performance?

First of all, I've never been a DJ. And I don't DJ. I can't. It's pretty bad. Ha! ha! I've always been a live musician and we slowly started with small gigs and built it and yeah, you write the album and you work out how you want it live, and so we just sort of got on with it.

SWATCH star Sarah Meier backstage

PHOTOS BY TIM YAP

Among all your albums, which song best exemplifies the essence of Chicane?

I am best known for three records—they are all very different sounding records, but they are all very Chicane at the same time. Probably "Offshore" because it's one of the few originally down tempo records that is also a dance record now as well.

Where did the influences for your sound come from?

Everywhere and anywhere. A lot of cinema. I don't listen to dance music, very small amount of dance. I find myself listening to a lot of old stuff, classical stuff—opera, soundtracks, that sort of thing.

SMART MTV. Boy Martirez, Miles Inocentes, Mary Ann and Francis Lumen are the people behind the biggest dance event of the year.

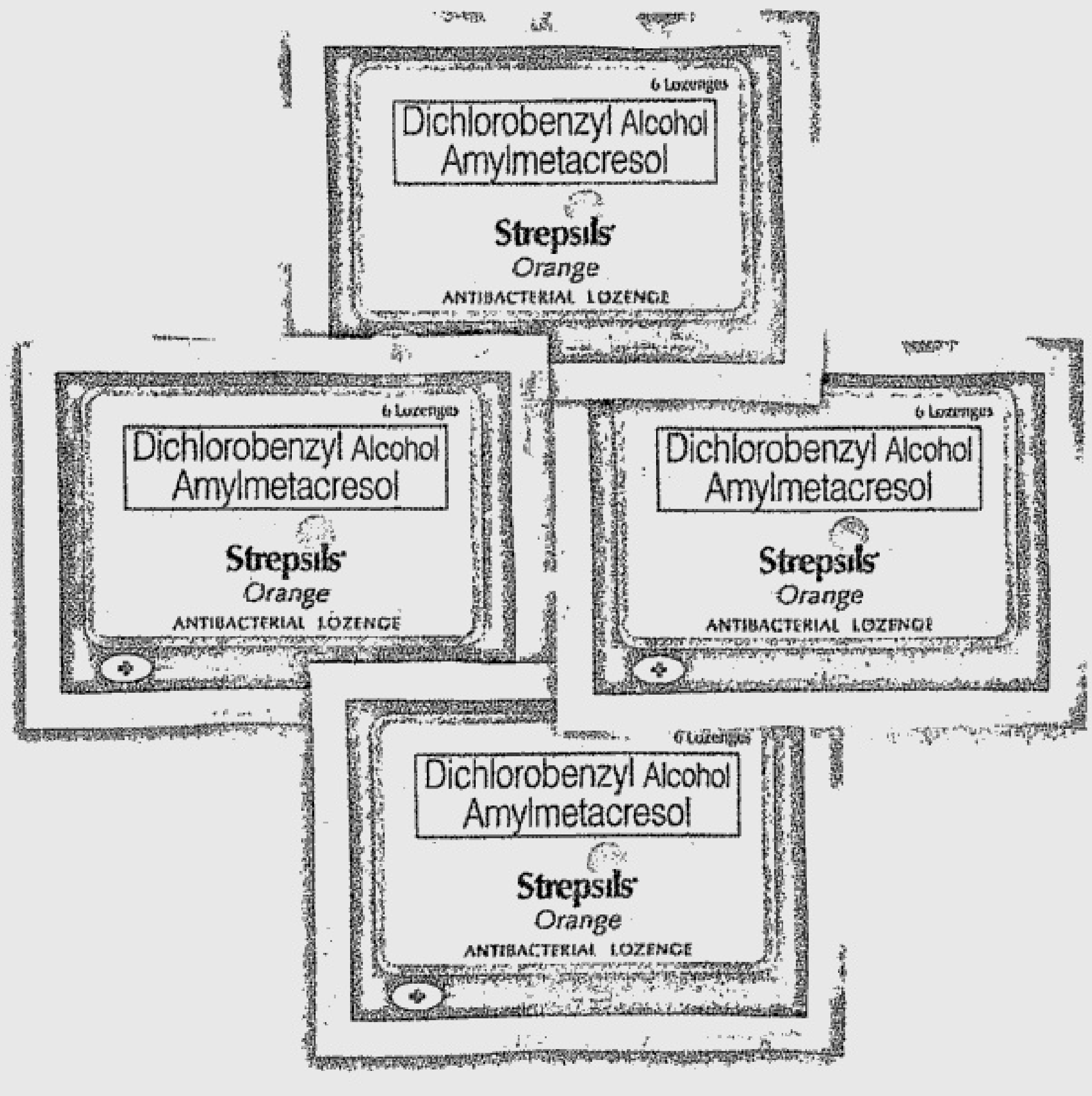
Are you planning to come out with a new sound?

I've been working hard, thinking what I will do for the new album—keeping it very Chicane, but putting up a new slant on the album.

What inspires you?

Islands... Ibiza... the beautiful country. You get inspired by all sorts of things and be like a sponge all the time. You'll never know, maybe sometime we might come up with an album called "Manila."

Next week: Part 2--Chicane, The Event



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Can't wait . . .

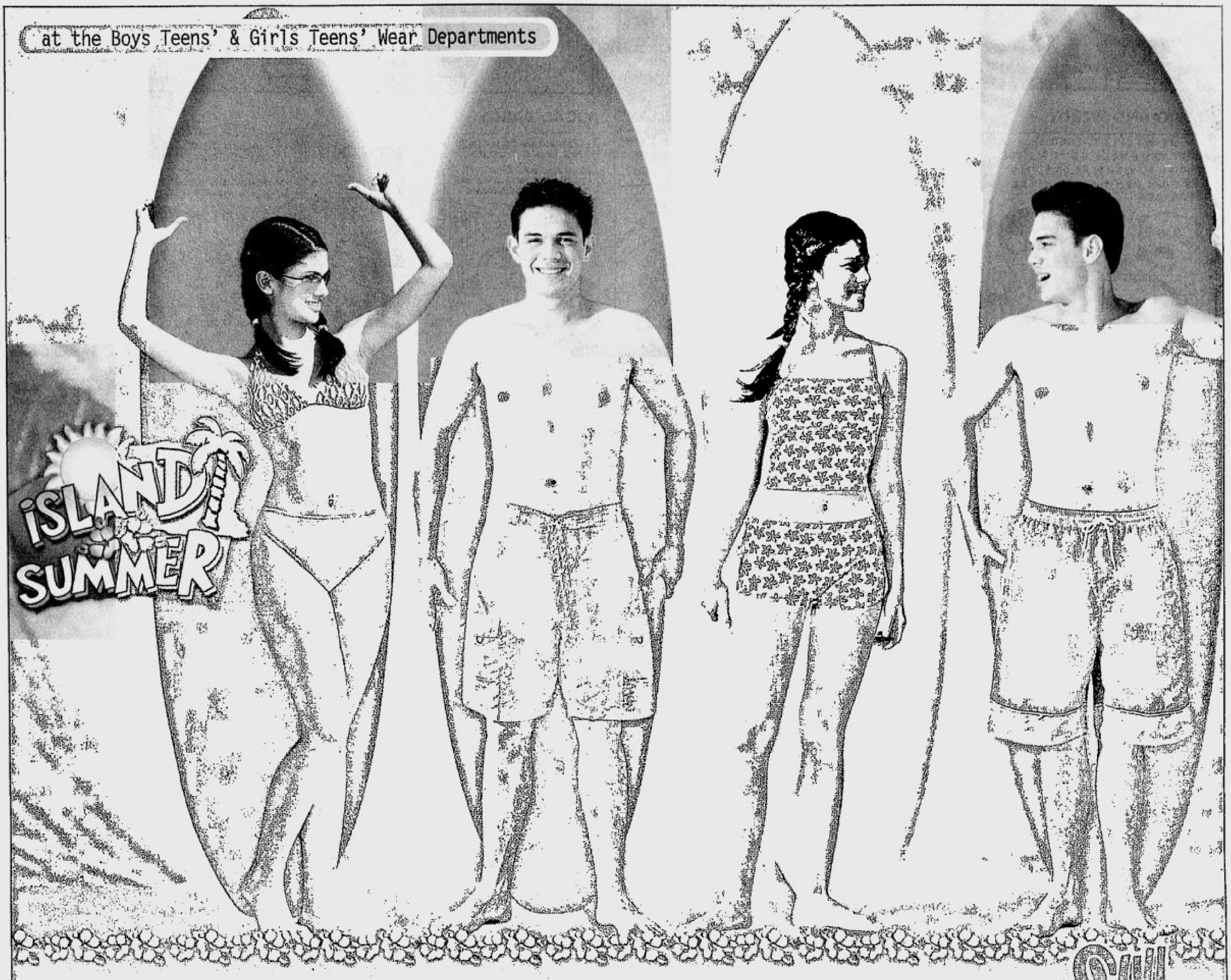
From page C1

school get strange nicknames, those in college get even stranger ones. Some teachers in my college were given a name as a group after Japanese tech heroes—Biomen and Voltes Five, for example. The names may be funny but you won't be laughing when you get into his/her class.

Kindred spirits. In high school, you tend to take for granted your friends and classmates who have been with you since childhood and whose culture is usually the same as yours. Everyone spoke the same language in high school and liked the same stuff. There was always someone there to give you a pep talk. Although college is a great opportunity to meet different kinds of people, some of their antics may be too strange and shocking, so unlike what you were accustomed to even if you try to keep an open mind.

I was dumbfounded last week when one of my male classmates suddenly asked me if I laughed while I peed. This same guy asked me at the beginning of the semester how girls got by despite not being able to pee standing up. His seeming obsession with the female urinary process causes me great distress. I dread to think what he will ask this week.

E-mail the author at unicorn@csi.com.ph or cathy_young1@yahoo.com



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For three Saturdays, beginning March 9, tell your kids to start looking for Easter eggs in the Junior Inquirer Easter Egg Hunt!

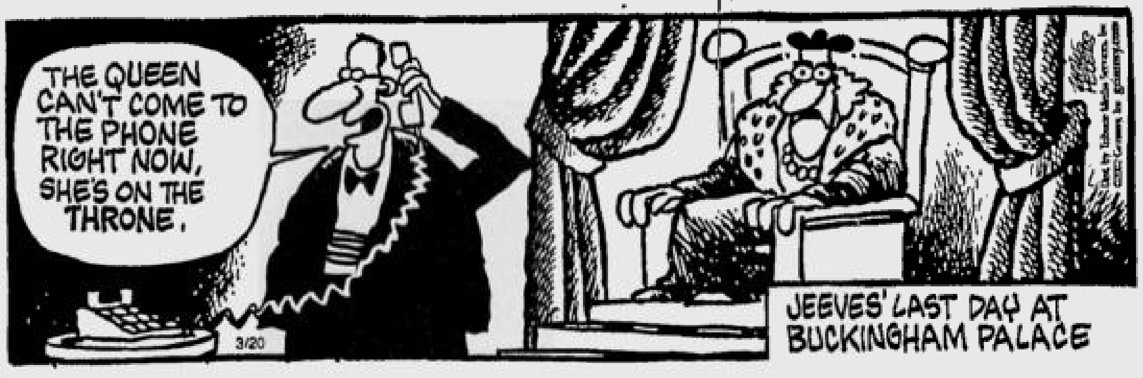
Cut and collect at least 9 eggs to join the raffle!

Per DTI-NCR Permit No 0820, Series of 2002

COMICRelief

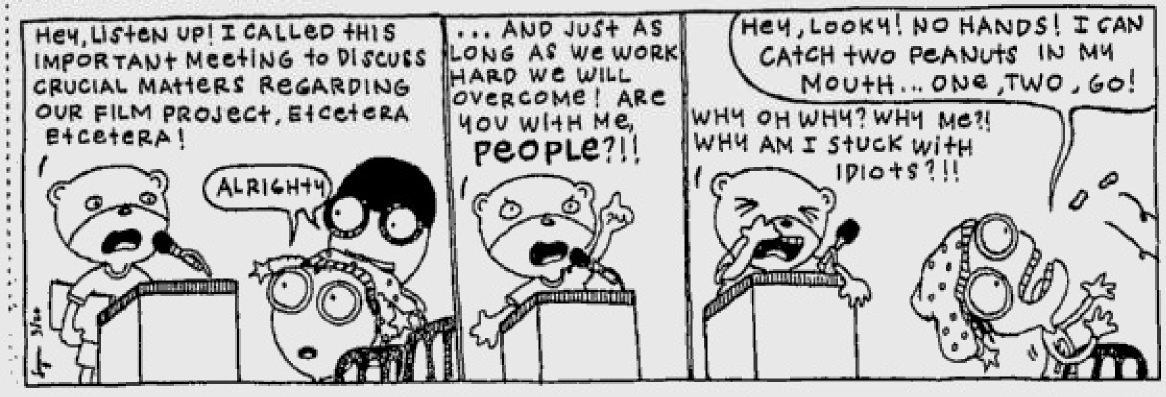
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


THE QUEEN CAN'T COME TO THE PHONE RIGHT NOW, SHE'S ON THE THRONE.
3/20
JEEVES' LAST DAY AT BUCKINGHAM PALACE

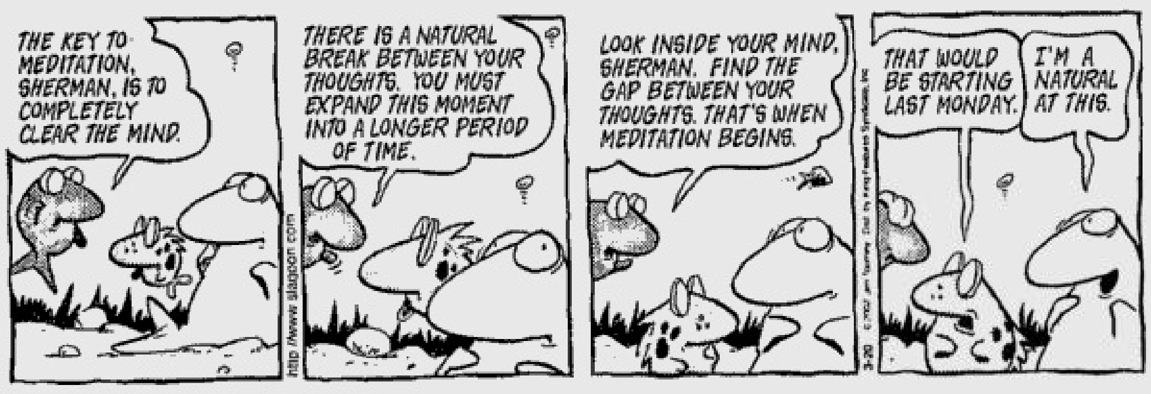
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Hey, Listen up! I called this important meeting to discuss crucial matters regarding our film project, etcetera etcetera!
ALRIGHTY
... AND JUST AS LONG AS WE WORK HARD WE WILL OVERCOME! ARE YOU WITH ME, PEOPLE?!!
Hey, Looky! No hands! I can catch two peanuts in my mouth... one, two, go!
Why oh why? Why me?! Why am I stuck with idiots?!!

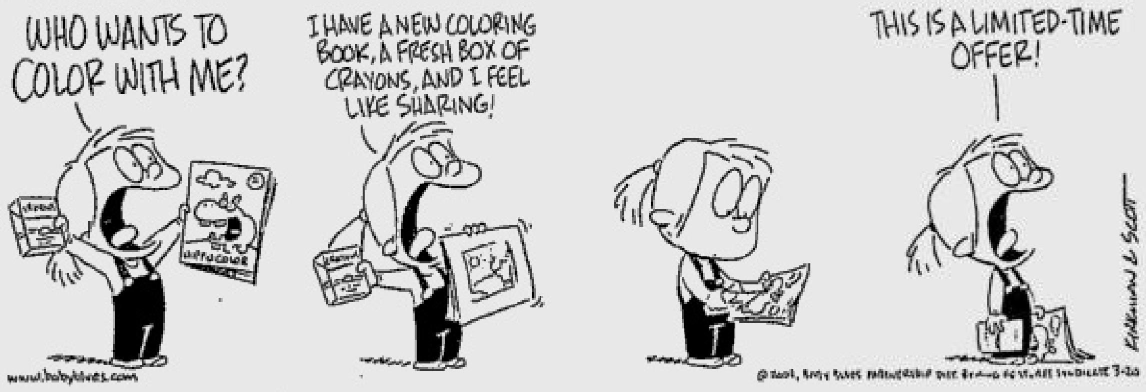
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


THE KEY TO MEDITATION, SHERMAN, IS TO COMPLETELY CLEAR THE MIND.
THERE IS A NATURAL BREAK BETWEEN YOUR THOUGHTS. YOU MUST EXPAND THIS MOMENT INTO A LONGER PERIOD OF TIME.
LOOK INSIDE YOUR MIND, SHERMAN. FIND THE GAP BETWEEN YOUR THOUGHTS. THAT'S WHEN MEDITATION BEGINS.
THAT WOULD BE STARTING LAST MONDAY.
I'M A NATURAL AT THIS.
http://www.slagoon.com
3-20

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


WHO WANTS TO COLOR WITH ME?
I HAVE A NEW COLORING BOOK, A FRESH BOX OF CRAYONS, AND I FEEL LIKE SHARING!
THIS IS A LIMITED-TIME OFFER!
KIRKMAN & SCOTT
www.babyblues.com

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Holly Hunter, Spike Lee, Carl Reiner, Bobby Orr

Happy Birthday: Focus on what it is you want to accomplish this year. If you allow yourself to get dragged into affairs that really aren't your responsibility you won't get the opportunity to follow your dreams. Put yourself first for a change and see how much you can achieve. Your numbers are 6, 13, 23, 37, 41, 48

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Your attitude coupled with your friendly demeanor will help you to draw attention to yourself as well as make new friends today.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): You can make professional changes today that will lead to all sorts of new possibilities. You will not have any problems convincing others of your abilities.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): You may be a little sensitive today if things don't go according to plan. Take time out to do things for yourself. Focus on making personal changes that will raise your self-esteem.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You can make all sorts of good moves today if you concentrate on investments, property, products and services for the home.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Your strong sense of pride and your ability to take charge should enable you to take a position of leadership in groups in which you get involved.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Don't let obstacles stand in your way. If you plan your actions carefully you should be able to outmaneuver any situation you face. Don't make promises that you know you will never be able to uphold.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): You will enjoy meeting interesting individuals who have something worth talking about. You will understand yourself better by listening to those who already know what they want out of life. Take advantage of the opportunities offered.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Put some thought into retirement plans. You may want to firm up on some solid investments that will help you feel more secure. Make the most of your time.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You may not want to face emotional issues today so it is best to avoid anyone who may just want to back you into a corner.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You can get ahead professionally and financially if you push your ideas forward. You will get the help you need if you simply ask for it. Don't let a co-worker or peer stand in your way.

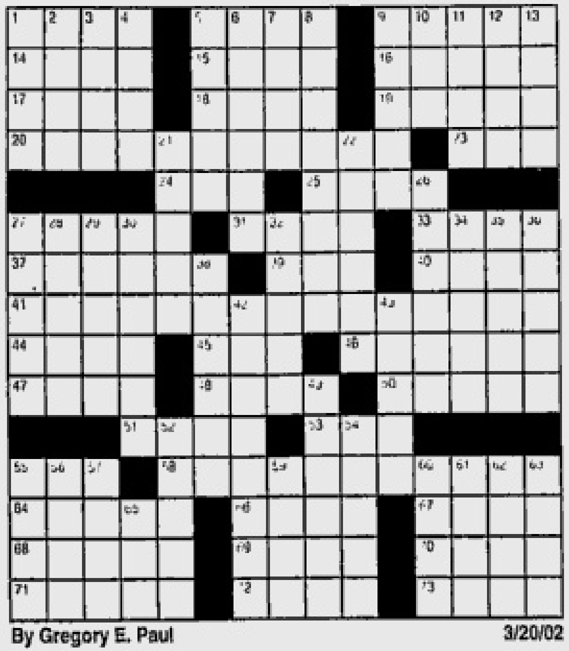
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You will have a good handle on your life and your direction today. Don't let anyone confuse you or try to lead you astray. You know in your heart what it is that you want to accomplish.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): You may have a problem with someone you are close to. Let him or her know where you stand and how you feel. If you get things out in the open it will be much easier on everyone concerned.

Birthday Baby: You are truly an individual, extremely intelligent and always eager to learn new things. You express yourself well and like to be thought of as articulate and bright. You are forever trying to do too much.

DAILY CROSSWORD

IMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Gregory E. Paul
Scottdale, PA

3/20/02

ACROSS
1 Lady's address
5 Grimm beginning
9 Gather together
14 "Come Back, Little Sheba" dramatist
15 Asta's mistress
16 Maker's sticker
17 Lead player
18 Actor Novello
19 Peace goddess
20 Lions
23 Inc. in Islington
24 Blue Hen St.
25 Tennessee's flower
27 Chicago stopover
31 N.L. stadium
33 Son of Aphrodite
37 Brunch choice
39 Branch of the mil.
40 Costa __
41 Tigers
44 Elbow-wrist connection
45 __ Ridge, TN
46 Sears
47 Laugh heartily
48 Needless activity
50 Cantankerous
51 Twins hurler turned broadcaster
53 Occupation indicator
55 Ruckus
58 Bears
64 Fly fisherman, e.g.
66 Small harbor
67 Puget Sound whale
68 Make up (for)
69 Grace's last word
70 Commits perjury
71 Triple feet
72 Final
73 Carrel furniture

DOWN
1 Not hit
2 Starter chips
3 Bacterial culture base
4 Emcee Griffin
5 Preserved
6 Library collection
7 Gator's cousin
8 First arrival
9 Acceptable excuse
10 Damage
11 Eve's second
12 Posted
13 Frome's vehicle
21 Fruit of the mind
22 Herschel's planet
26 Tranquil
27 Come to pass
28 Hi!
29 Showplace
30 Comment
32 Corn covers
34 Onion order
35 Santa's team, for example
36 Flippant
38 Kind of sponge
42 Sea-going
43 Same here
49 Doesn't grow a beard
52 Building lots
54 Contract negotiator
55 On vacation
56 Items of information
57 Scent
59 Suspended consciousness
60 Narrated
61 One of HOMES acronym
62 King beaters
63 False face
65 Consummation

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

L	A	S	T	S		O	M	A	R		S	W	A	B
I	N	P	U	T		F	O	R	E		H	O	R	A
S	T	A	G	E		T	R	I	P		A	M	O	S
A	I	R		F	R	E	E	Z	E	F	R	A	M	E
		E	L	F	I	N			A	R	E	N	A	S
R	E	T	A	I	L		M	E	T	E				
A	L	I	T		E	M	I	T		T	O	S	C	A
M	I	R	E		S	A	T	U	P		S	T	O	P
P	E	E	R	S		L	E	I	A		C	R	A	B
				O	I	L	S		T	R	A	I	T	S
T	R	I	T	O	N			S	T	A	R	K		
B	A	N	A	N	A	S	P	L	I	T		E	R	A
I	D	E	S		R	O	U	E		T	R	O	O	P
R	I	P	S		U	R	G	E		L	O	U	S	E
D	O	T	E		T	E	S	T		E	N	T	E	R

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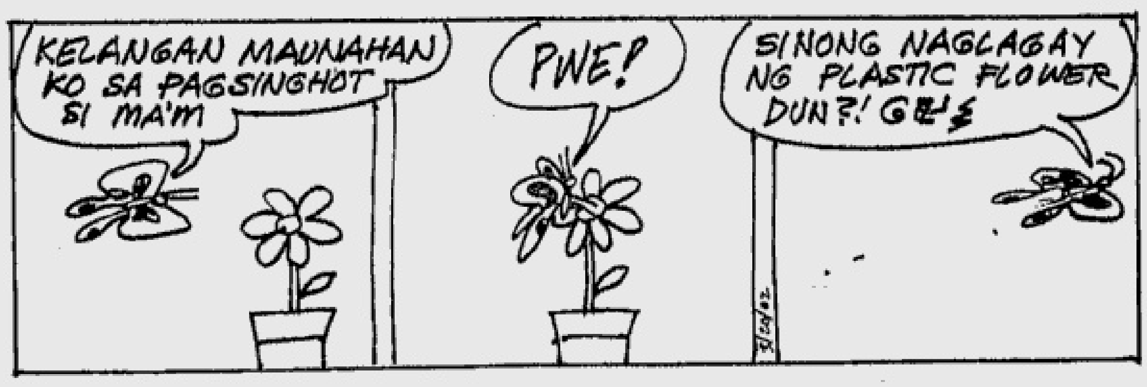
3/20/02

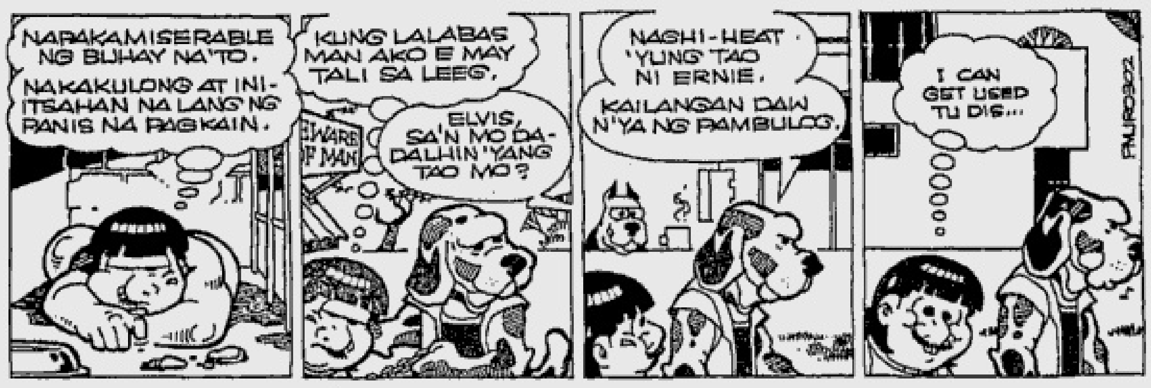
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


KELANGAN MAUNAHAN KO SA PAGSINGHOT SI MA'M
PWE!
SINONG NAGLAGAY NG PLASTIC FLOWER DUN?! G#!$
3/20/02

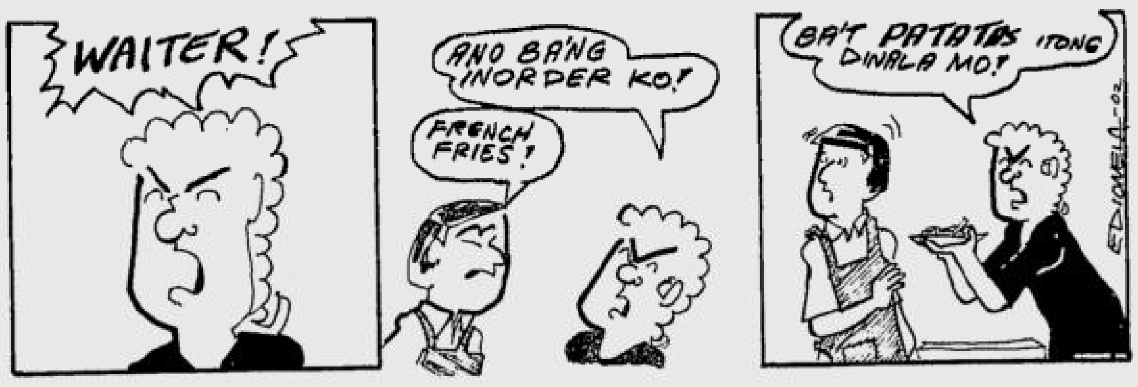
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


NAPAKAMISERABLE NG BUHAY NA'TO.
NAKAKULONG AT INI-ITSAHAN NA LANG NG PANIS NA PAGKAIN.
KUNG LALABAS MAN AKO E MAY TALI SA LEEG.
BEWARE OF MAN
ELVIS, SA'N MO DADALHIN 'YANG TAO MO?
NAGHI-HEAT 'YUNG TAO NI ERNIE.
KAILANGAN DAW N'YA NG PAMBULOG.
I CAN GET USED TU DIS...
PMJR0302

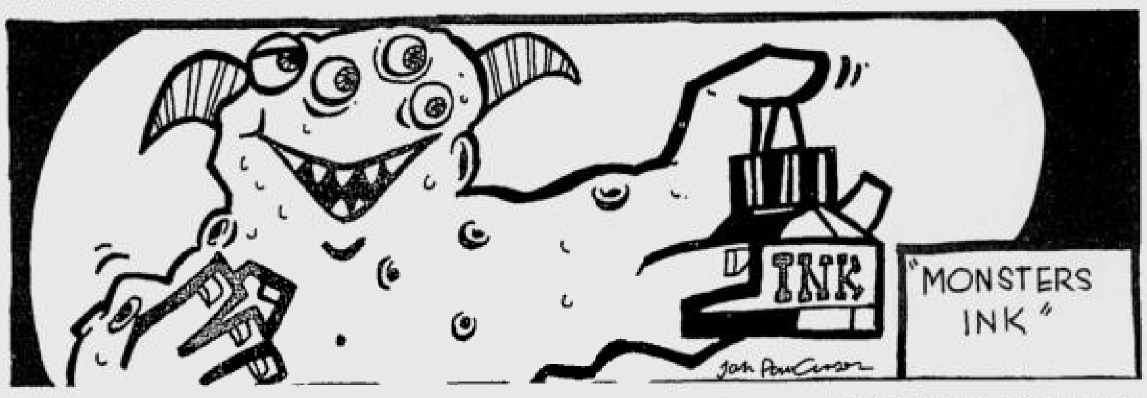
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


WAITER!
ANO BA'NG INORDER KO!
FRENCH FRIES!
BA'T PATATAS ITONG DINALA MO!
EDIONELA-02

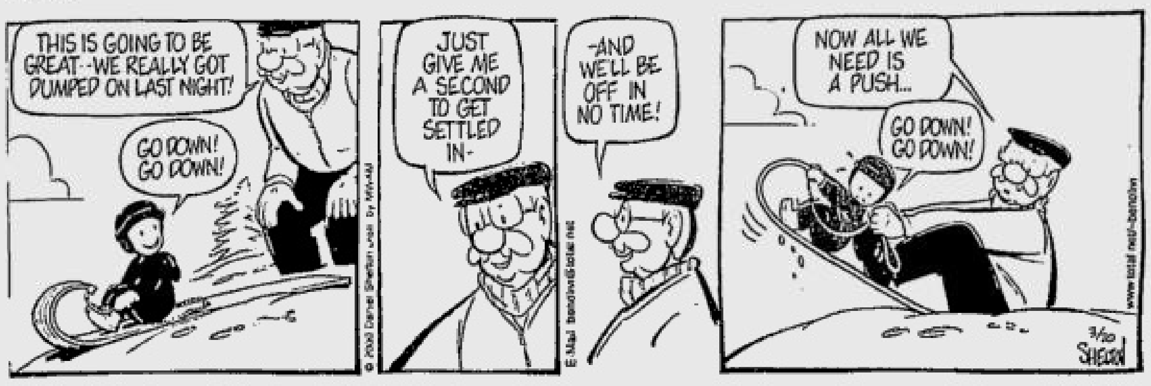
GARAPATA BLOOD

BY JOHN PAÚL CUISON


INK
"MONSTERS INK"
John Paul Cuison

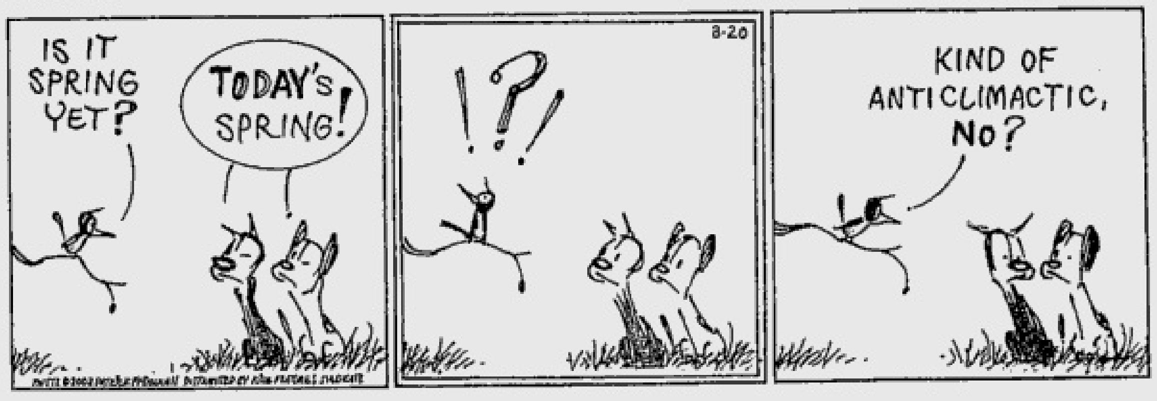
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


THIS IS GOING TO BE GREAT--WE REALLY GOT DUMPED ON LAST NIGHT!
GO DOWN! GO DOWN!
JUST GIVE ME A SECOND TO GET SETTLED IN-
-AND WE'LL BE OFF IN NO TIME!
NOW ALL WE NEED IS A PUSH...
GO DOWN! GO DOWN!
3/20
SHELTON

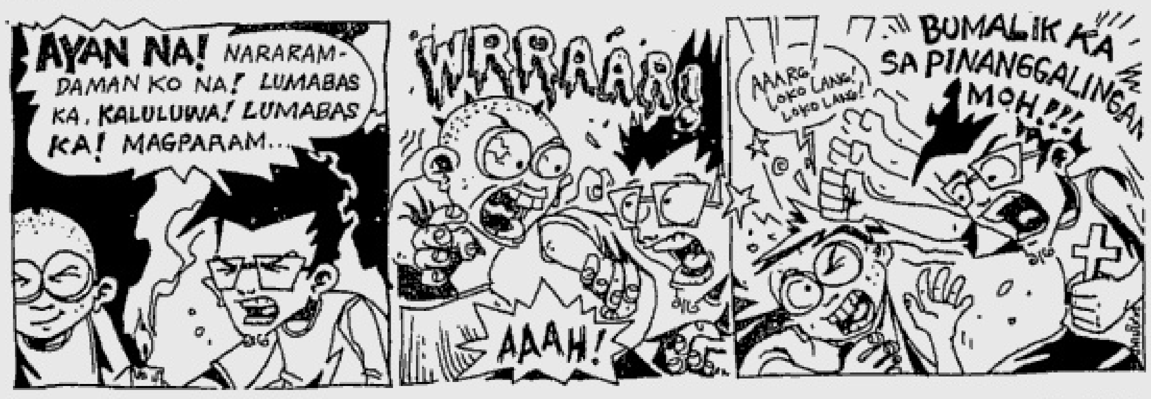
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


IS IT SPRING YET?
TODAY'S SPRING!
3-20
!?!
KIND OF ANTICLIMACTIC, NO?

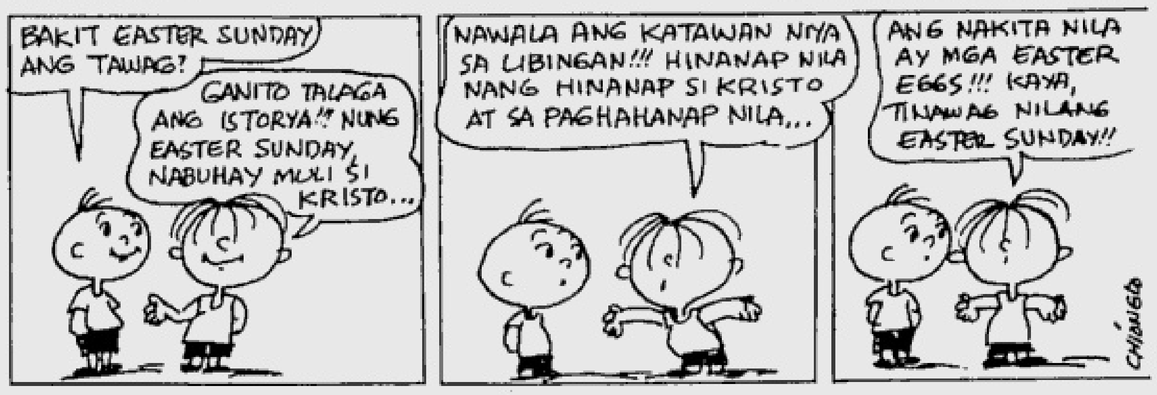
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


AYAN NA! NARARAMDAMAN KO NA! LUMABAS KA, KALULUWA! LUMABAS KA! MAGPARAM...
WRRAAAR!
AAAH!
AAARG! LOKO LANG! LOKO LANG!
BUMALIK KA SA PINANGGALINGAN MOH!!!

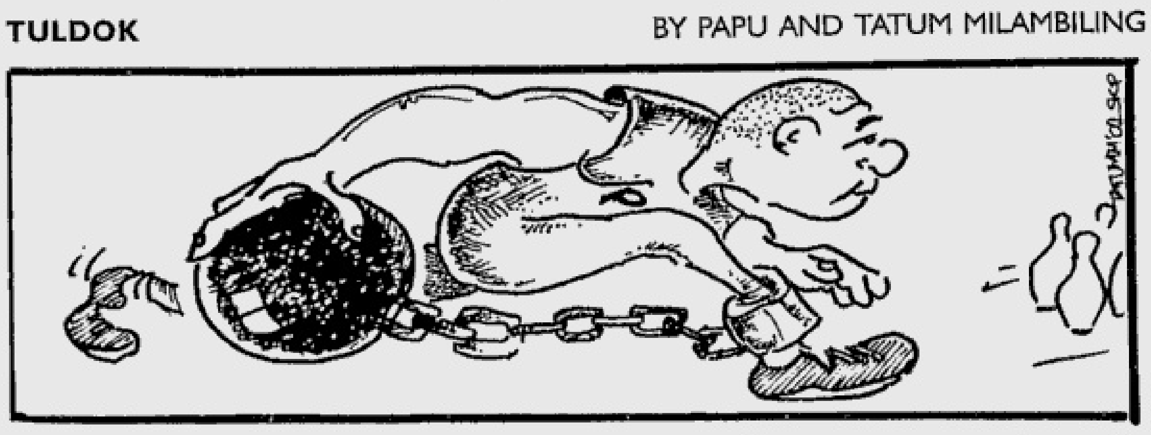
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


BAKIT EASTER SUNDAY ANG TAWAG?
GANITO TALAGA ANG ISTORYA!! NUNG EASTER SUNDAY, NABUHAY MULI SI KRISTO...
NAWALA ANG KATAWAN NIYA SA LIBINGAN!!! HINANAP NILA NANG HINANAP SI KRISTO AT SA PAGHAHANAP NILA...
ANG NAKITA NILA AY MGA EASTER EGGS!!! KAYA, TINAWAG NILANG EASTER SUNDAY!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING



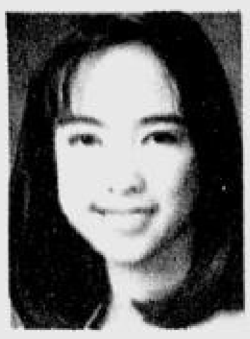
AND THE WINNERS ARE . . .

What will you do right after graduation?

WE asked 2002's graduates to tell us the first three things they intend to do after they throw their graduation caps in the air. Here are our first four winners. These girls will be receiving dinners for six at C2 restaurant.

Thanya Tiu
21 years old
Architecture, University of Santo Tomas

- I'll take a much-deserved vacation after graduation. After all, I've spent five grueling years studying in school.
- I'll try my luck and take the board exams.
- Hopefully I'll pass [the exams] and land a nice paying job.



Vanessa Joy Rodriguez
23 years old
BS Computer Science, UP Diliman

After graduation, I will...

- Sleep! I need to make up for all those sleepless nights doing projects, machine problems and reports.
- Treat my friends out to dinner (hopefully at C2). I never would've made it through college without them. That will be my way of showing them my appreciation.

After catching up on zzzs and partying, I need to...

- Plan the rest of my life. Its time to face reality and start looking for work. I will also have time to concentrate on my other passion—cooking and baking.

Ma. Alessandra M. Hernandez
20 years old
Bachelor of Science in Hotel and Restaurant Management, St. Paul's College, QC

- Take a short vacation.
- Enrol in short courses in cooking and baking.
- Find a job as soon as possible.

Monica Felise A. Jara
20 years old
BS Biology, UP Diliman

I'm off to medical school this June but, hey, I'm looking forward to a long summer vacation. There's more to life beyond the classroom. Here are the three things I'd do right after graduation...

- Road trip. My batchmates in bio have always been the adventurous types. We've gone beach-bumming in Subic and Punta Fuego to end our past semesters. We've hied off to Enchanted Kingdom and Tagaytay during one occasion. This summer, we plan to go on a road trip to Pagudpud in Ilocos or ride the ferry to Puerto Galera. It'll be sun and fun for a week. We've scrapped our plans to go shopping in Bangkok. We don't have the money, anyway.
- "Satur-date." I'm so lucky to have a *barkada* from high school who I see every Saturday (hence, the term "Satur-date"). There are four of us in the group, all girls. We usually watch a movie at Power Plant and have lunch, or go shopping and have coffee. Reminds me of the women of "Sex and the City." Since we study in different universities, we catch up on the latest *kwento* that happened during the week. We've been through crushes and breakups, present and future career decisions. They have always been *the* girls I have turned to whenever I have problems. So after graduation, I'll treat my best girl buds to the usual "Satur-date": Lunch and a movie, probably an extra treat like a foot spa. Then we'll spend the entire afternoon laughing and talking.
- Soul food. All those memorizing and cramming has taken its toll. I've wanted to read good novels which have only accumulated on my desk. Read again my favorite short stories such as "The Notebook" and "Tuesdays with Morrie." At the end of the day, I'd indulge in my greatest luxury, sleeping soundly for nine hours.

If you haven't joined yet, don't fret. You still have time. Send us a list of three things you plan to do right after graduation along with your name, age, school, course and contact numbers. Don't forget to send us your graduation pic, too.

Entries may be sent to the PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER Inc. Building, corner Chino Roces Avenue and Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City. Or e-mail contest2bu@inquirer.com.ph.

Deadline for submission is on March 18, 12 nn.

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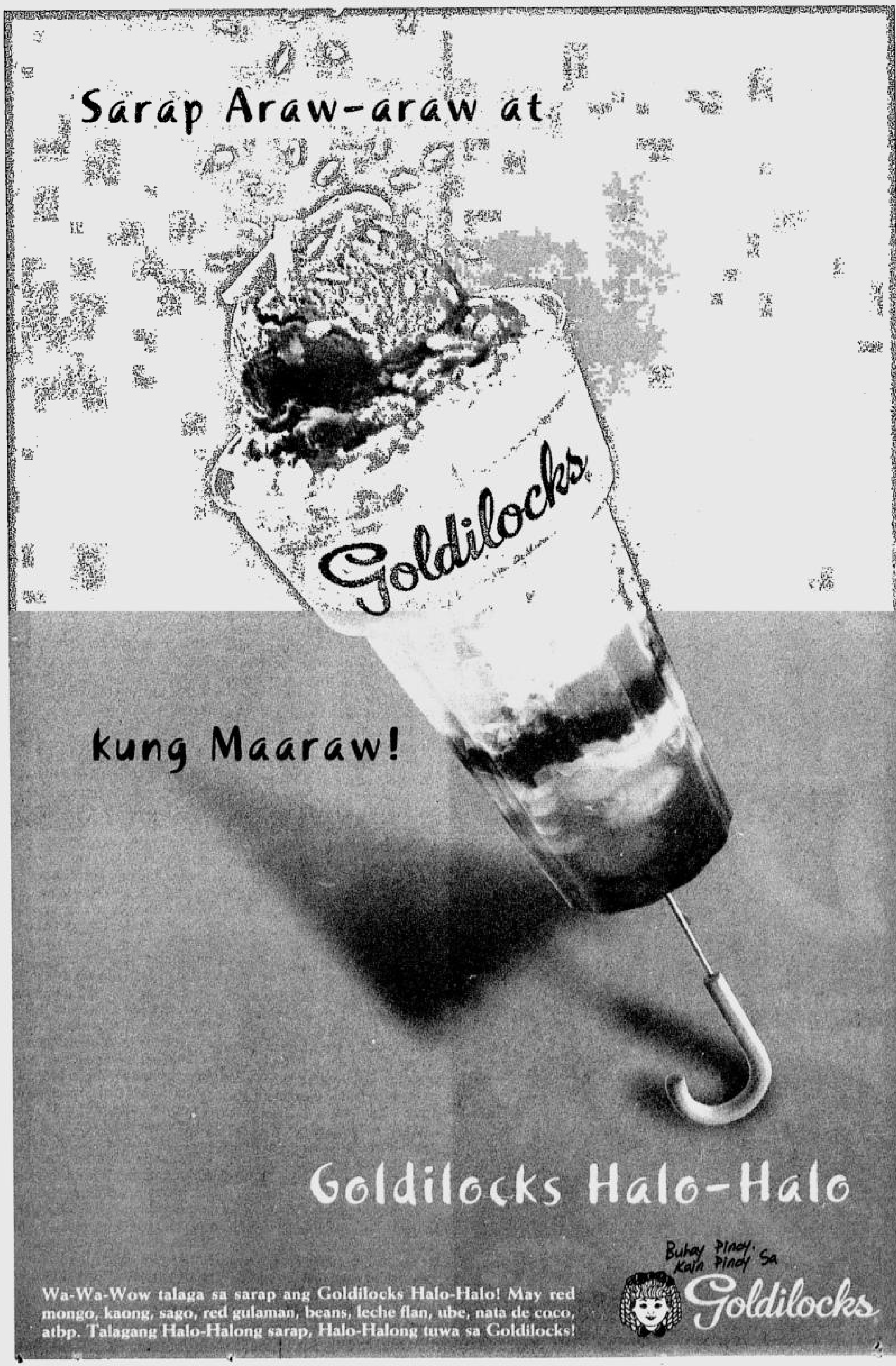

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Strange things people study

By Gmeleen Faye B. Tomboc
2bU! Correspondent, UP Diliman

PROBABLY only a few people know that there are courses like Sports Science and Landscape Architecture. Even fewer people would believe that there are jobs waiting for those who actually graduate from those programs.

Peter Dajimne, 24, was the quintessential nerd in high school. He studied all the time and was the type to be picked on by bullies. So what made him enrol in BS Sports Science in the University of the Philippines Diliman?

DENNIS Miciano

"I wanted to choose the most unusual course," he laughs. "Back in 1994, the course was so new that people thought I was kidding when I told them about it." He did think of shifting to Interdisciplinary Studies at Ateneo thinking there would be no future for him. But he enjoyed the environment at the College of Human Kinetics so much he stayed. He said, "People here are very jolly, and have a lot of fun."

The course may sound like one big physical education class but Sports Science majors take classes like biology, anatomy, biochemistry, physics, biomechanics and mathematics. After all, the course involves the application of the natural sciences and mathematics to sports. Students learn stuff like what types of muscles to move for a free throw, what foods improve performance during games, and at what angle should a basketball pass be made to avoid having the ball "stolen" (answer: pass to a teammate ahead of you located at 45 degrees because you have a better view of him rather than to the one beside you). They also have to specialize in three sports—know everything about these sports from playing, to being a referee or umpire and coaching.

As in other courses, there are lectures to attend and term papers to write. Dajimne, Daj for short, did a thesis on whether the length of arms and legs of basketball players determine how good they will be (he confirmed that height is might).

After graduation, he worked for the Philippine Sports Commission seeking potential athletes for the national teams. He also taught Physical Ed classes part-time in Ateneo. He is now back at UP as researcher/instructor in basketball, badminton, table tennis and weight training, among others. At the same time, he is a researcher for the Department of Health and coach of the Miriam High School basketball team. "What I like about my job is that I don't get stuck at a desk," he said.

Aside from research, coaching and teaching, he said other career options for Sports Sci majors were managing fitness clubs, pursuing medicine, organizing tournaments, or being professional referees. In fact, even while studying, he already earned money by organizing a Milo Basketball League event, and helping the MBA team, Cagayan de Oro Nuggets. Only 10 graduated from Dajimne's class in probably the only school offering the course.

A lot of things are going for graduates of unusual courses, not the least of which is less competition

BS Geology students are another rare breed, with only about four schools, among them UP Diliman, offering the course. Bambi Romero, a 24-year-old graduate didn't want a job that would tie her to an office. "Geology is actually an excuse to see a lot of the Philippines," she said. She has done field work in Baguio, where they walked along the Kennon Road identifying rock formations, Ilocos Norte to see the sand dunes in Laoag, which she said was the country's only desert-like environment. In her last year in school, she and her class spent three harrowing but fun-filled weeks in Zamboanga where they passed MILF checkpoints at the height of the kidnapping scare.

After she got her diploma, she went to Malaysia for a job interview, which landed her the job at Shell Philippines Explorations. "I study waves or movements of the earth to find oil and natural gas," she said. She went to the Netherlands for training.

BING Villanueva

Geology was a bit like detective work, she explained. By studying the rocks in a certain area, they played treasure hunters of sorts determining where minerals like gold and copper could be found. Geologists were asked to find out the cause of the Cherry Hills landslides a few years back.

Geologists work in geothermal companies, government agencies, oil service companies, science journals and environmental consulting firms. They can also study further to be volcanologists, paleontologists (those who study dinosaurs), archeologists, or marine geologists.

You may have to thank professional landscape architects for that garden in Tagaytay Highlands or the well-manicured lawns of a golf course that you admire. But Bing Villanueva, 23, clarified that Landscape Architecture was not just about gardens but also involved the study of places like parking lots, subdivisions, cities and even how traffic flowed. Villanueva said, "We are often mistaken for architects, but while architects are concerned with shelter and with buildings, we are concerned with the spaces that surround these structures."

Nor are they to be confused with landscapers. Landscape Architecture is more than just about choosing a good mix of plants and finding a nice spot for a grotto or a fountain. Students of Landscape Architecture memorize the plants' scientific names and learn how these plants grow, so they can design low-maintenance gardens. They take up engineering subjects to learn the rudiments of land surveying and map making.

Villanueva's most memorable experience was climbing Mt. Makiling to identify its different plants while warding off leeches. For her undergraduate thesis, the Tarlakeña made a plan for the improvement of the lahar-covered areas of MacArthur Highway. "Landscape architecture is not just about designing open spaces that are nice to look at. More importantly, it is about uplifting people's spirits," she said.

Only very few are enroled in the course, which is only offered in UP Diliman, and there are only about 130 licensed landscape architects in the country. Graduates can join the Philippines' few landscape firms. Topping the 2000 Board examination, Villanueva landed a job at Ildefonso Santos and Associates, the first firm of its kind in Southeast Asia. Other landscape architects start designing gardens, mainly for relatives and friends, even while studying.

People may think BS Agribusiness Management is all about agriculture. Not so, according to Dennis Miciano, a 2000 graduate. "Our course is essentially a business course, with an emphasis on agriculture," he said. They might do stuff like planting rice, milking cows, dressing chickens and castrating pigs, but they're also well-versed in things like finance, accounting and marketing.

Miciano took up BS Agribusiness Management having grown up in an agricultural area in Nueva Ecija. But while agriculture was close to his heart, he wasn't quite as prepared as he thought. "I realized that it's hard to plant rice with your feet mired in the mud," he chuckled. He realized, however, how practical farmers were and how little he knew of the real world.

Careers for graduates are surprisingly many. Although other state colleges and universities also offer this course, the about 100 who graduate from UP Los Baños every year get job offers even before graduation.

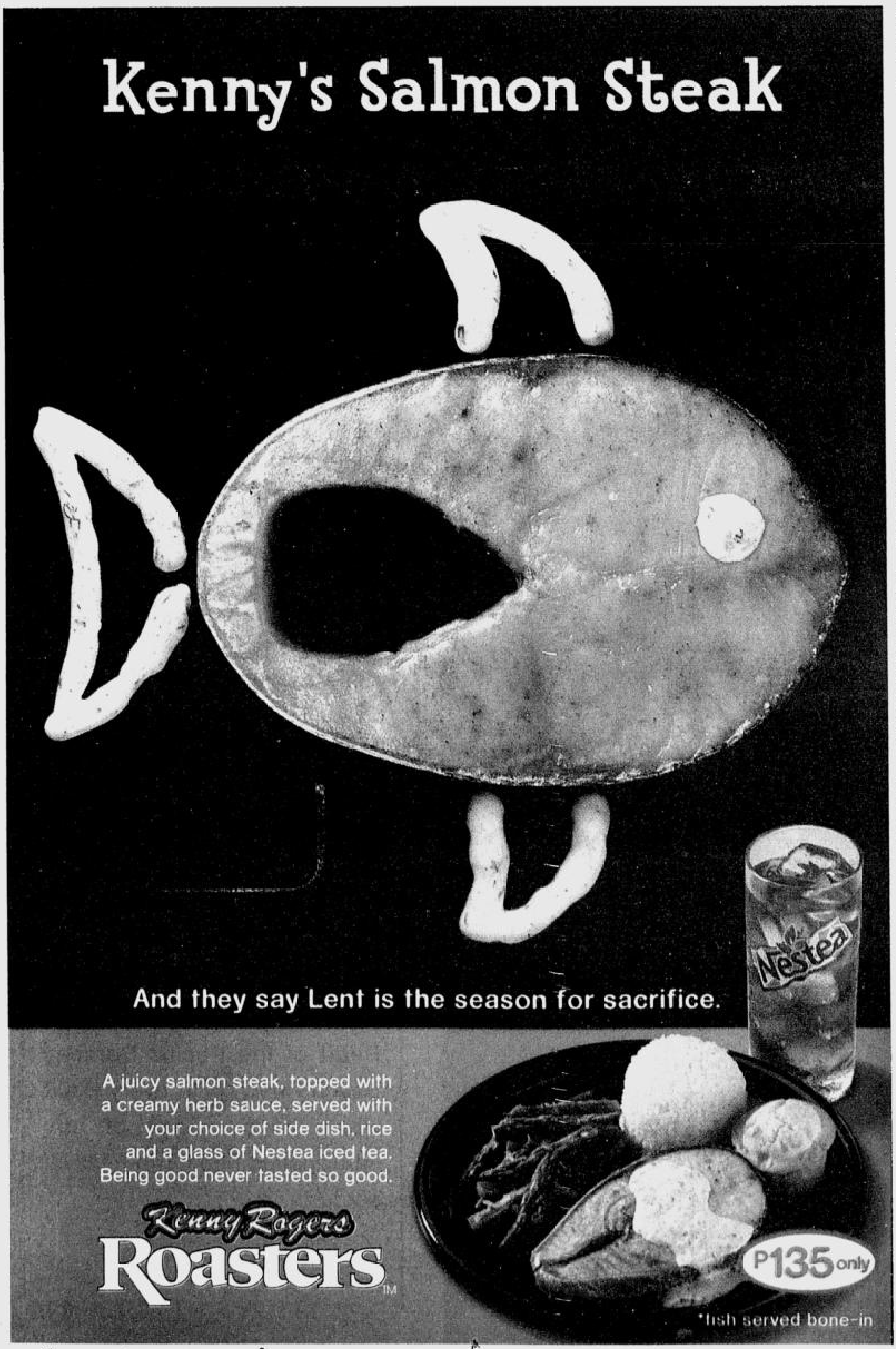
Predictably, many of them go into agricultural companies. Miciano is a marketing analyst for Monsanto Philippines, a producer of herbicides, pesticides and other agricultural products. His office is in Alabang but his work takes him to different places to talk to farmers about their needs. He also helps conceptualize ads for radio and print.

Donny Fajutrao, another Agribusiness grad, is also in the agriculture industry, promoting feeds for fighting cocks in the Nueva Ecija and Bulacan area. He is on the road about 70 percent of the time. It is an immensely fulfilling job for someone who would rather be out in the field talking to people rather than sitting behind a desk.

Others graduates join research agencies. Agribusiness grads are also found in banks, stock brokerage houses or running their own businesses. Some are managing their own farms.

"The best part about my course," Fajutrao said, "is that while I can drive a tractor and talk to the lowliest farmers about breeding animals, I am also at home with finance and marketing concepts."

Courses like Sports Science and Geology may sound strange but there are a lot of things going for their graduates, not the least of which is, because they are few, they have less competition to worry about.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Her friend wants to take the initiative in knowing a guy better

Carlos Garchitorena & September Mahino

DEAR Sep and Caloy,

I have a friend who has a problem with her love life. She has feelings for a guy whom she met last summer. I believe that the guy likes her, too, but he is too shy to talk to her. My friend wants to make the first move but she is afraid of what others will say about her. Another friend of ours, who happens to be a friend of the guy, told her that the guy couldn't approach her because she never talks to him.

Others say that he is nice while some say that he is a playboy. The worst thing we heard was that he is a drug addict. My friend tells me that despite everything she heard about him, her feelings for him have not been affected. And I know for a fact that she doesn't like guys who smoke and do drugs.

I've told my friend that if the guy sincerely likes her, he'll approach her. And I think she should wait for him to make the first move. I want her to be happy. So please tell me how I can help her.

RORY

When they're not the ones involved in the problem, most people—concerned friends, especially—tend to simplify the situation by giving solutions that seem to be the most obvious thing to do. And I initially agreed with what you told your friend about waiting for the guy to make the first move not because it's not nice to see a girl taking the initiative to know a guy better, but because waiting could spare her from the possible embarrassment of finding out that the guy doesn't feel the same way about her. But if this problem is already creating more trouble for your friend than an embarrassing situation would, I suggest you let her try approaching the guy. Let her get to the bottom of things and find out why he stares at her. She could also find out which of the rumors that you've heard about him were true. You know about all those TV shows where old people tell younger ones that the things they most regret were the things they didn't say and do? The same cautionary advice could work for your friend. Whether the guy is really nice or not, I think it would be best if she explores for herself the possibility of starting and actually being in a relationship with him. I'm sure that whatever experience she would get from this, it would probably be worth it.

SEP

Funnily enough, in my rapid ascent to the upper echelons of Manila's literary circles (which in fact are simply water stains on antique furniture), I deem myself successful in maintaining my grace under extreme circumstances such as these where a reader finds no reason to write, having had no experience firsthand whatsoever, and proceeds to make a case study out of problems best dealt with sans nosy intrusions. If there was any way I could make those words leap out of the page and slap some sense into you, Rory, I would make a note to the editor, that it be done.

In all my days of once a week column pitting conundrum versus consolation, I've been consulted by colleagues and commiserators on quite complex, but rather discombobulated conflicts. But I have always reserved my right to not answer a reader's curious, comments encrypted in faulty conjunctives, nefarious nouns, or points hidden in fragment under fragment under fragment. In spite of this, I have often attempted to return the effort made by the reader to write, especially when matters at hand are of the personal sort.

Thank you for your faith in us.

CARLOS

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LIFESTYLE

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Graduate *from* what?

Giles Ivan A. Aquino
2bU! Correspondent

JUST a few more sunsets and sunrises and I'll graduate. Farewell to allowances, to head-banging concerts, to college weeks, to my editorship of the school paper, to Amichi (Don Bosco school canteens), to the school's foundation days and to cutting classes!

But what exactly are we graduating from? Here are some answers:

Graduate *na ako* [from] being Mr. Topsy Turvy. Hello, Mr. Spic and Span. My things are easier to find now than before when everything, even my mind, was in a mess.—**Mart Tagaduar, 22**

I've graduated from easy tasks. As Don Bosco's current College Student Council president, I'm taking hold on the real responsibilities.—**Allan Orale, 23**

I've already graduated from looking for a real partner.—**David Aquino, 21**

I've graduated from trying to be a grownup. I've realized you actually have to grow up to be one.—**Mary Natalie Casuela, 19, UST**

I've already graduated from flirting with girls. That makes my life a lot easier.—**Leo Paul Pangilinan, 20**

Graduate *na ako sa pambabae*, although, people would still call me Jonbang. As in *mabangis sa mga babae.*—**Jon Lawis, 24**

Graduate *na ako ng kabibili ng* CD every week. Last year, *hindi puwedeng lumipas ang isang lingo na walang* CD. *Ngayon, 'pag* sale *na lang* and if *may* CD *na* worth *bilhin.*—**Sherwynn Ryan R. Aban, 22**

Graduate *na ako sa pagiging* idealistic *sa lahat ng bagay dahil na* realize *ko hindi lahat ng gusto mo makukuha mo* according *sa gusto mong mangyari.*—**Mitch Cabillon, 20, DLSU-Bacolod**

I thought I graduated from stress. Was I wrong.—**Cathy Young, 18, UP**

... Going out on *gimmicks.*—**Eldric, 19**

I've graduated from smoking, drinking and picking my nose in public.—**Jun Gabriel**

... From eating lasagna before downing tequila. Never, never, never again. Evil, evil, eeevil. And dating musicians, especially guitarists.—**Maui, 18**

Graduate *na ako sa* tequila. *Ayoko na ng* never-ending hangover.—**Aya, 24**

... Sanity, and that was a long, long time ago.—**Angela, 19, B.S. Bio, Ateneo de Manila**

I've graduated from being nice to everyone.—**jdb, 15**

GRADUATE/ p.D2

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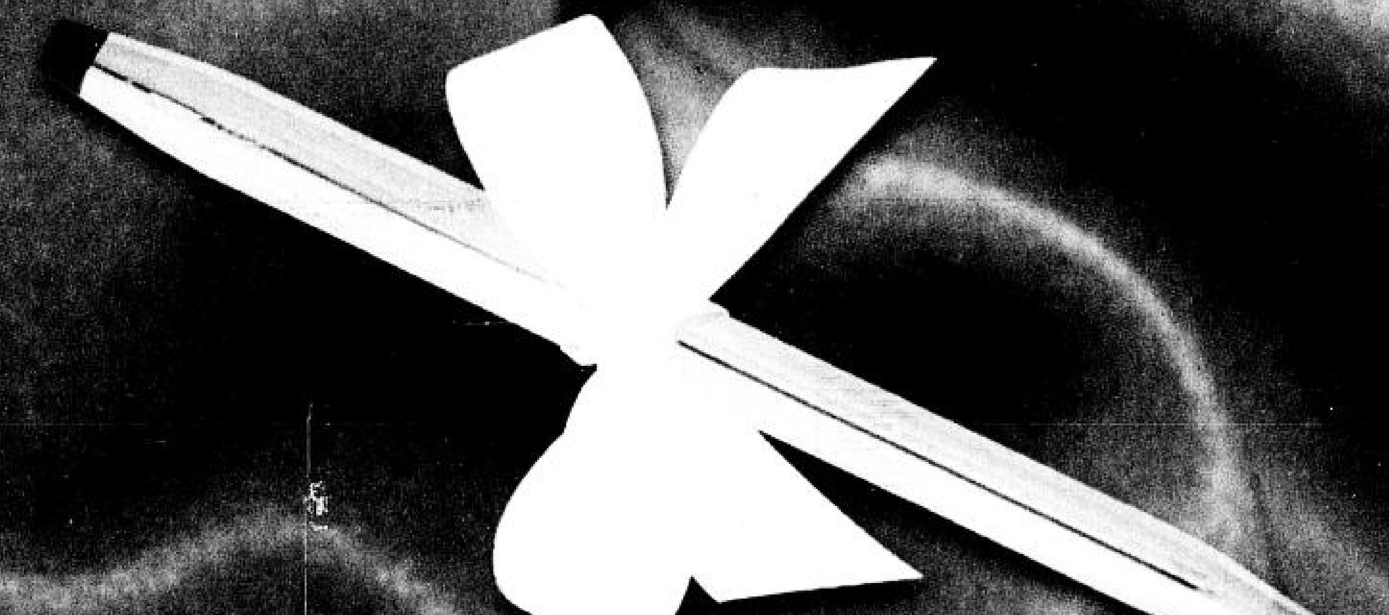

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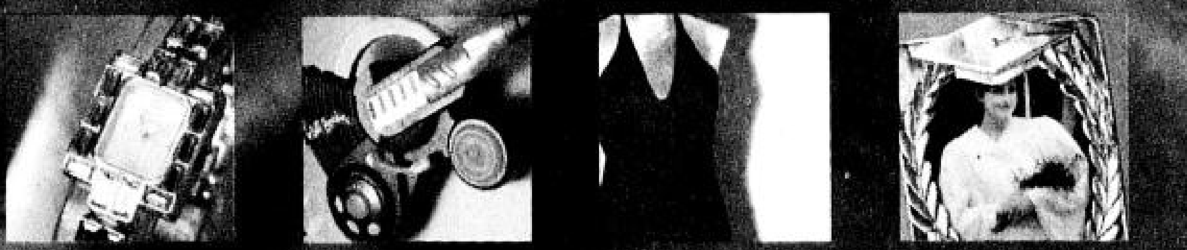

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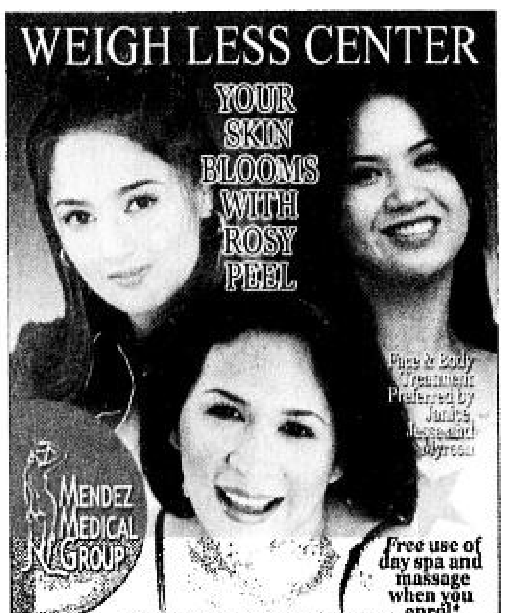

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Graduate *from* what?

From page D1

I've graduated from dating boys who make me feel like I'm the man in the relationship. I've graduated from men who can't commit, men who commit too much, men with stalking tendencies. I've graduated from weirdos and psychos. And hell, am I keeping my fingers crossed.—**nocturnal angel.tk**

Graduate *na ako sa paghuhugas ng plato.*—**Roy, 23**

Graduate *na ako sa pambababae kaya sa lalaki naman.*—**Anonymous, 23**

Graduate *na ako sa* cheating, swear. It's a high school thing.—**Jason, 21**

I have already graduated from confining myself with a career of being unhappy. People will be my saving grace, and they will help me realize the beauty in life.—**Ferdinand delos Santos, 20**

Graduate *na ako sa pagcha*-chat... *nang buong araw.* He! He!—**Bene, 22**

I've graduated from trusting too much.—**Gareth, 20**

I've graduated from overspending and buying stuff I don't really need.—**Hazel**

Graduate *na ako sa pambababae. Kailangan sa ganitong panahon,* stick to one *na.*—**JP, 18**

Graduate *na ako sa pag-amoy ng bagong hubad na medias.*—**JR, 19**

I've finally graduated from chicken pox!—**Jugs, 22**

I've graduated from smoking.—**Alvin, 25**

JON Lawis

I've graduated from consciously looking for jobs. Sometimes, you're just not gonna find it—the right one will find you.—**Bunny, 22**

I've graduated from being overly dependent on someone.—**Cher, 18**

... *Kaplastikang mundo ng* high school.—**Raymond Fabul**

... Poserville that is the Ateneo.—**Yosef Garcia, 18**

... Porno.—**Erwin, 17**

I've graduated from senseless men.—**Lei, 18**

Graduate *na ako sa bangga ng kotse.*—**JM**

Graduate *na ako sa pambababae. Kukuha na ako ng* doctorate.—**BJ, 19**

Graduate *na ako sa paninigarilyo... pero patago.* He! He!—**Kendrick Bautista, 19**

... *Sa hindi pag-inom ng alak.* Hak! Hak! Hak!—**Archie Jude C.**

I've graduated from criticizing other people.—**Mark de Leon, 18**

Graduate *na ako sa pagiging* childish.—**RJ Angeles, 18**

SHERWYNN Aban

LEO Paul Pangilinan

Graduate *na ako sa* baby bra.—**Cami Tonolete**

Graduate *na ako* from a martyr's life. How could I have been stupid all the time?—**Cherifer, 18**

Graduate *na ako sa pag-inom nang walang humpay. Sawa na ako!*—**Bunny**

... From listening to trance music.—**Marlon Cervantes, 21**

... *Sa pagsisinungaling.*—**Sarah, 17**

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No need to take out a bank loan for graduation

By Michelle C. Pino
2bU! Correspondent

COMPLETING all the requirements, clearing your records and acing the last exams are just a few of your worries when you get to the final semester in college and prepare for graduation.

Even if you expect a lighter load and a more relaxing schedule, you are pressured by the thought of graduation and life thereafter. And there is the shock—fortunately short-term—of finding out how much you will have to spend to march on stage and get that valuable diploma.

2bU! wants to help you prepare for the big day by suggesting ways to bring graduation expenses to manageable levels.

- Yearbook. Though optional in some colleges and universities, it is better to get one for yourself. It might be pricey, but it is worth keeping. Prepare P1,500-3,000.
- Graduation photo. Don't bother getting a yearbook if you will not have your graduation portrait made. The same photo will be used in your yearbook. You wear a toga with your school's logo for the first time, before the graduation ceremony. No need to worry much about how you will look. Everybody is photogenic in a grad pic. Trust the makeup artist. After five years or so, when you see your blown-up and framed graduation portrait, you will be happy to be reminded of how smashing or gorgeous you looked in college. Visit a number of photo studios first to make sure you get your money's worth. Prepare P1,000-2,500.
- College ring. It's optional in most schools, but the sentimental value of the ring (besides the monetary value, especially if you have it made in gold) still encourages graduates to invest on a college ring. The rings come in many designs to fit your personality. Students can have them in silver or gold. Stick to your budget, or you can have the ring made next year when you are earning your own money. Prepare P900-5,500.
- Toga. The coat and cap say it all: You are 100-percent certified graduate. The ensemble is just for rent and you do not have to worry about finding one. It's the school's job to find out where its graduates can lease togas. Some schools have alternatives to togas. At the UP Diliman, they wear *sablay* (some form of sash) instead of togas, which they either buy or borrow. If you go for the traditional black toga and coat, make sure you wash them first before the big day (for hygienic reasons). Prepare P300-750.
- Clearance fee. If you are not in the habit of visiting the school registrar's office, you will have to make the effort if you are graduating. Nobody leaves school without clearance. You would have to set your records straight and complete your deficiencies, including unpaid student loans or fees, incomplete grades, late submission of requirements and papers to sign and fill out. The tedious work is needed to reach the finish line. Be patient and manage your time so you do not cause any further delay. Fees range from sensible to stratospheric. Prepare P250-1,250.
- Gala. Proms are for teeners while a graduation ball is the social event for young adults. Take time to prepare for one. You may even want to join the Grad Ball Committee. Have fun conceptualizing the event—theme, food, entertainers and others. Many graduates no longer like the traditional, formal event. A party is an appealing alternative. Instead of going to hotels or penthouses, choose one of the hippest clubs or places in town as venue. Prepare P500-1,000.

These are just some of the expenses you should prepare for. There are a lot more, such as coat and tie or *barong* for the men, or dress for the women, not to mention shoes and accessories. When no gala event is organized, some graduates have their own parties. That has to be included in your budget.

Don't let the projected expenses rob you of the pleasure of graduation and even make you decide not to participate in the event. You can opt to mark graduation through simple, inexpensive arrangements and still feel grateful enough for every blessing you had.

> Don't let the projected expenses rob you of the pleasure of graduation andeven make you decide not to participate in the event

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ON APRIL 6, several teams will compete in YOU.inq7.net's interactive adventure, the "E-mazing Race." The teams will start out at the Glorietta Activity Center. The "E-mazing Race," which is now online at you.inq7.net/promo/emazing/, will take them along the length and breadth of the mall—and even into cyberspace.

The teams will have to log on to the YOU website at you.inq7.net to discover clues to their next destination. This is apart from the various mental and physical challenges contestants will have to overcome.

The "E-mazing Race" is just one of the many fun activities during the day-long celebration of the formal launch of YOU, INQ7.net's interactive portal for the youth. This user-generated site and online community is composed of three main sections: 2bU!, Cross-Campus and JUNIOR INQUIRER. INQ7 Interactive Inc. is the joint online and multimedia news and information delivery company of the PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER INC. and GMA Network Inc.

The online nomination of team members is now ongoing at you.inq7.net/promo/emazing/. Send in nominations via e-mail to emazingrace@inq7.net, or nominate your own teams. The e-mail message should contain the team name (limited to one word with no special characters), names of participants, ages and their schools.

Each team should have a maximum of three members—either a combination of two males and one female or two females and one male. An all-female or all-male team will receive a penalty of 20 minutes during the race. Deadline for submission is March 25.

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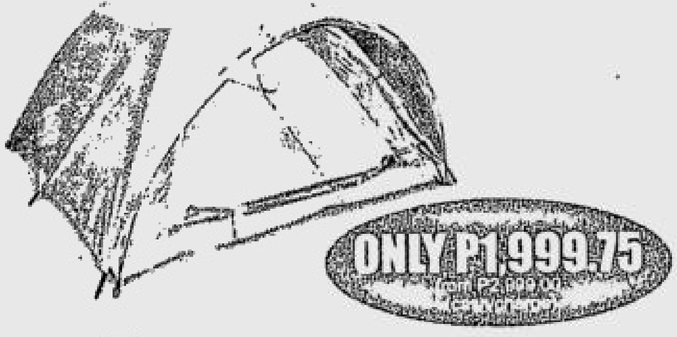

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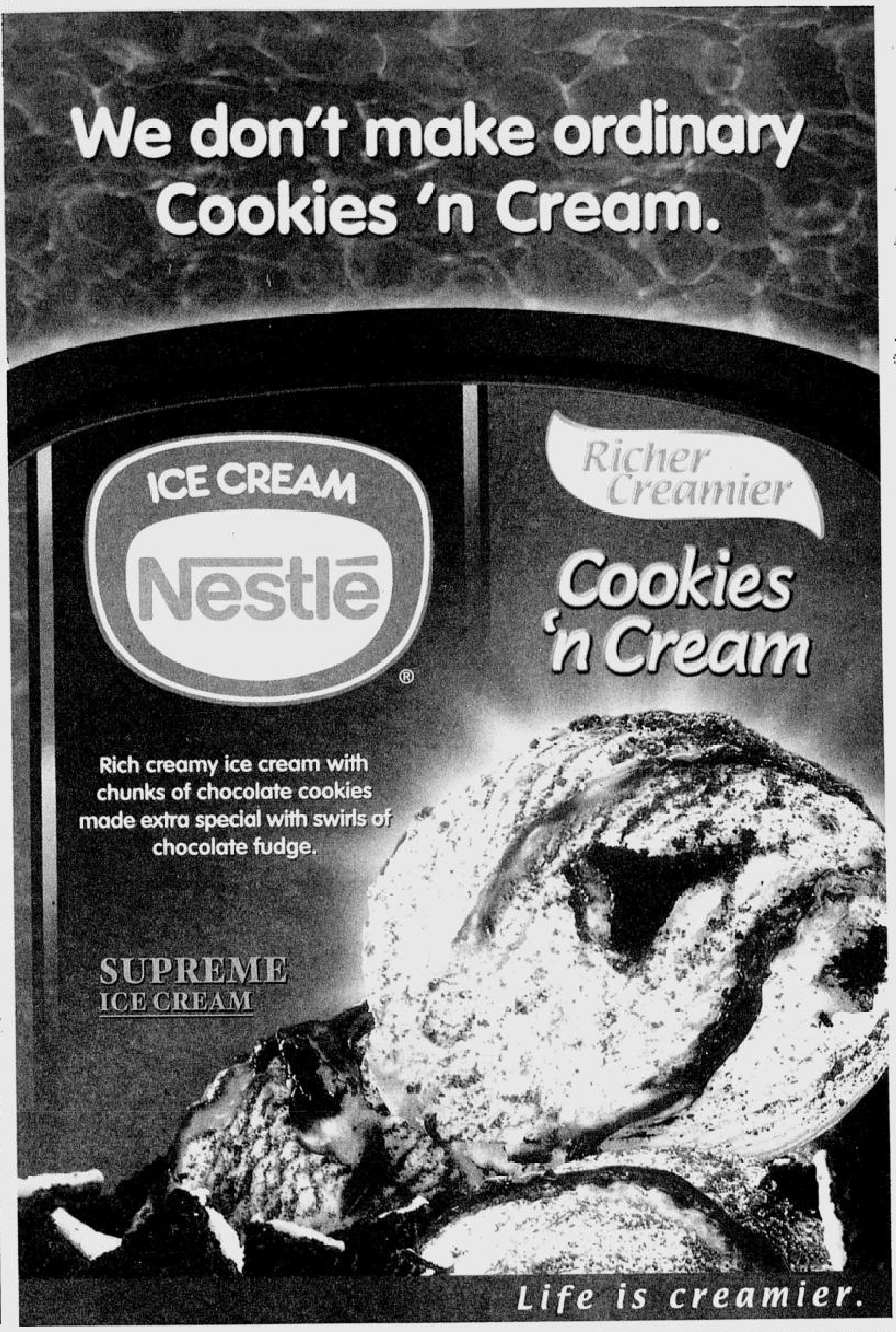
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Job-hunting on the Web

By Gabriel H. Mercado
2bU! Correspondent

FIRST of all, congratulations! Pat yourself on the back for making it. You wish you had done better and made the honor roll? You're going to miss your friends? Forget those, you have to concentrate on a much bigger challenge. Now you have to look for a job.

Fortunately, there are many local job websites that'll help ease the burden of looking for a job. Job websites are some of the more realistic and more successful web-based ideas. They aid the job seeker in two ways:

- Remember that job websites make money from companies looking for hires. Therefore they must deliver results and fill their client's openings quick. This works for you because they are essentially working extra to find people jobs. If they don't show results, they will not get the business.
- A company that uses the Internet, whether to advertise its products, communicate with suppliers, and in this case, to look for staffers, speaks volumes about it. To be sure, you'd want to work for a company that is forward-looking and IT-savvy.

> The Net offers convenient classified ads for the job seeker

Check out the following job websites:

Trabaho.com

Trabaho.com is the first local job website of note and is a sentimental favorite to some. I personally have used it more than twice in my career. I'm sure a great deal of its success has primarily to do with its easy-to-remember domain (how can you forget "trabaho.com" when you're jobless?), and its easy to navigate, no-nonsense interface following a close second. Once you get there, jobs immediately flash in your face, with details only one click away. Once you get your bearings, you can start looking for jobs categorized by date, industry, career, location and government-related.

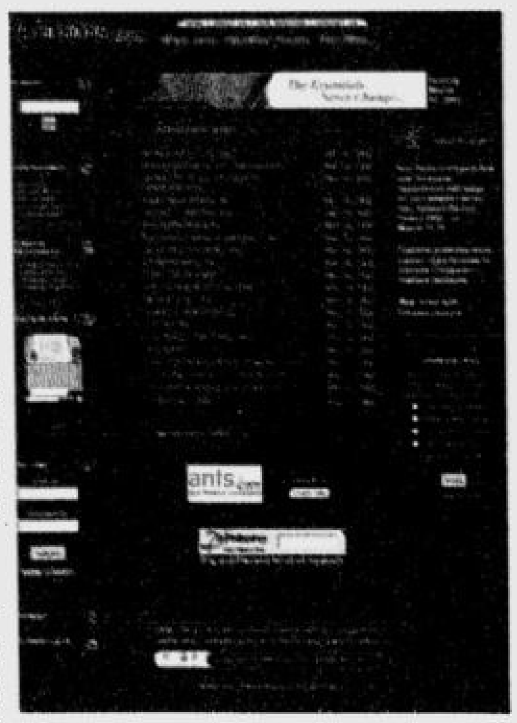
It's a wonder though why the site separates jobs according to career and industry, which seem redundant. True enough, a search in IT jobs in one sometimes produce the same result in another. This may make one feel as having missed an opening somewhere. Also, it would help a lot if there were a short description of the job beside the company's name and a counter beside the industry. It's ok the first few times, but seeing "No Current Job Posting" gets annoying after a while.

Portions include "Articles," "Q&A" and "Tools and Insights." Strange though is "Book Review," "Komiks" and "Cyber Cafés." I can't imagine buying a book to be a job-seeker's priority. And even if it is, the books reviewed aren't for sale via the site anyway. The rest seem to be there to just fill up space.

Jobsdb.com

Jobsdb is a little more high-tech in approach. An international site offering its services in 11 countries, it offers the standard job listings per company and/or industry. It also allows you to leave a "virtual resumé" online for prospective employers. This is important because you won't have to look at the site daily to check for openings.

The "db" in Jobsdb stands for "database."



A thorough sign-up process makes you enter details about yourself, including educational attainment, preferred location (even abroad), and even preferred salary. Other tools such as "Talent Market, "Personal Job Listing" and "Job Alerts" help you respond properly to inquiries, which, of course, at this stage you are crossing your toes and fingers and making wild promises in your prayers to receive.

Frankly, that kind of energy will be helpful when going through Jobsdb's lengthy signup process. At certain times it can get rather confusing, as I sometimes get asked questions about signing up for other services without an explanation of what they are for. I'm nitpicking actually, as within a few minutes after I finish, the site automatically matches me to four pages of jobs that I may be qualified for. I can then instantly apply, collect openings on a "clipboard" along with other interesting ones, or send the information to a friend who might be interested.

Jobstreet.com

Another popular site with Asean appeal is Jobstreet.com, which allows you to post your resumé for possible openings in several countries. The site's initial page is rather cluttered, with banners all over proclaiming partnerships with other websites and services, job fairs, surveys and polls. The signup box is for existing members, and it took me several clicks to sign up as a new member.

Yet another, even lengthier sign-up form asks detail upon tiny detail of your personal and professional life. This is all well and good, but I have to admit I don't think some of the information needed are really important. Specific dates are asked about one's previous employment and graduation, where just month and year would be enough. Telephone numbers are also required, when a mobile number would do. At least these should be optional.

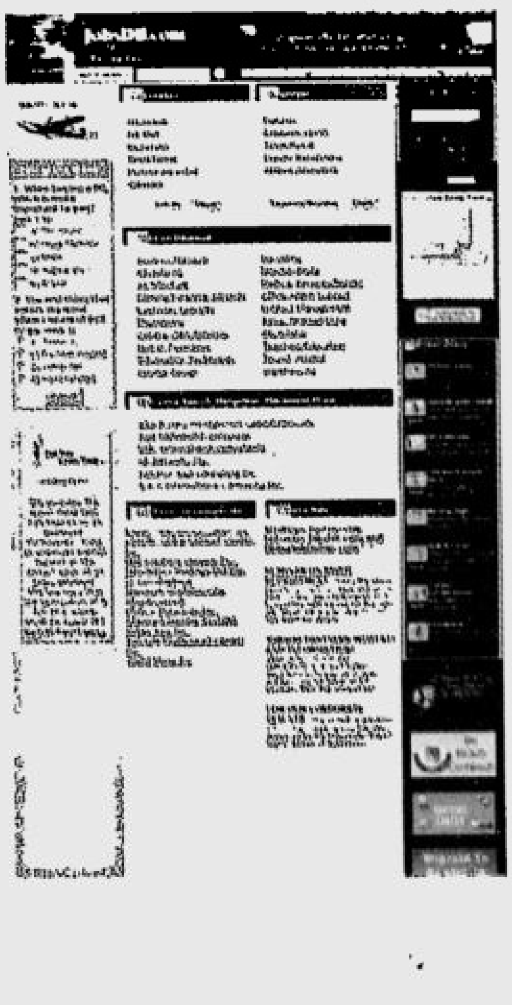
There are tons of help, although the font sizes should be made two sizes larger. You can also upload a photograph, and make a "searchable resumé" where you can enter keywords about yourself, and an "authenticate myresumé" where you can download a numbered document, then print and snailmail it.

Although the layout should be more focused, Jobstreet is obviously another interesting choice for the job seeker. Once again pump yourself with caffeine to get through the lengthy forms, and make sure you have a good, fast connection for those seemingly endless page after page of info you have to type in.

Final tips

These sites are just samples. Here are some tips: Get a second e-mail address to avoid spam and check it daily. Be optimistic, cheerful and stay focused and consistent when entering details about yourself. Try signing up and checking around what details the site asks for, type it down in Notepad, ask more experienced types for their opinion, then enter the requirement only when you're perfectly happy with how it reads. Save it so you won't need to retype it when signing up for other jobsites.

Finally, although we can get used to having things for free on the Net, if you find a job, please take the time to thank the site and promote it to others. The Net is really one big community of people interacting with one another, and if you find something useful, your recommendation serves as your contribution to the community and a way of helping others.



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